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LONDON

REEL K 14 B

Admiralty War Diaries

1-10-41 to 31-12-41

cont'd from Reel K-13-B

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

DOHENEY, SAINT CLAIR, SAMOA, EMIDIO, AGWIWORLD. — U.S.Ships. See Washington 1321R/21, under America & West Indies, and D.S.839.

AVANASOFF. — Russian tanker, torpedoed and sunk on or before 21/12 about 15 m. N. of Mitylene (D.S., 839, 22/12).

AUDACITY (Aux. Aircraft Carrier). — Following has been received. AUDACITY and some of convoy torpedoed position 138° 44° N., 20° W., 8. (STORK, 2105A/21).
AUDACITY sank. CONVOLVULUS, MARIGOLD, picking up survivors. My position 1000A/22 will be 044° 48' N, 020° 20' W., 047°.
(STORK, 2210A/21 to Admty. C. in C. W.A.)

Submarines Reported.

0320 — Following has been read from Gibraltar W/T One S/M on surface position 315 SPA 13 course 095° speed 17 knots. (Med. A/C., 0320/21).

1038A — Four U Boats estimated to be in area bounded by 47° N. and 43° N. and 15° W. and 17° W. (D.D.I.C. 1038A/21 to WESTCOTT).

1055A — One S/M bearing 290° 7 miles approx. true course unknown posn. QMNA 1244. (49.12 N. longitude indecypherable) (WESTCOTT, 1055A/20).

1115A — Two U-Boats in 042° 23' N. 020° 19' W. one unable to dive. Have despatched ships to attack but suggest long range aircraft also. (STORK, 1115A/21 to C. in C. Plymouth).
STORK's 1115A/21 if fuel permits proceed forthwith to attack these U/Boats. (C. in C. W.A., 1245A/21, to WESTCOTT Repeated STORK F.O.C.N.A. Admty).
Report received from STORK two U-Boats unable to dive in position OPS 359 21/12 4223 N. 2019 W at 1115/21 (H.Q.C.C., 1300A/21 to 200 Group).
My 1115A. 2 more submarines reported by aircraft in 042° 40' N. 020° 00' W. (STORK, 1300A/21 to C. in C. W.A., Admty. etc.)
Your 1115A/21. No aircraft available to hunt today, but Liberator should arrive dawn tomorrow. (C. in C. W.A., 1325A/21 to STORK).
Your 1245. Could arrive vicinity at daylight 22/12 and after searching during daylight would have to proceed Ponta Delgada for fuel.
Intend to proceed Gibraltar unless other instructions received. (WESTCOTT, 1330A/21 to C. in C. W.A.)

/My 1115A....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 21.12.1941. Sunday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

1115A (Contd.) My 1115A. Aircraft sighted two U-Boats alongside each other transferring men, three of whom were shot by aircraft. One U-Boat had hole in side. Relief aircraft unable to locate either. Damaged U-Boat presumably either dived or scuttled. Suggest cause collision during night. Weather report. (STORK, 1355A/21 to Admty. C. in C. W.A., etc.)
Your 1330A/21. Proceed to Gibraltar. (C. in C. W.A., 1550A/21 to WESTCOTT).
Uncoded weather report. My P.C. and S. 044° 40' N. 016° 26' W. 200° 15 knots. (WESTCOTT, 1800Z/21 to Admty.)

Pacific. From somewhat confused reports of definite attacks on Merchant shipping mainly by gunfire at night, deduction is that enemy submarines are operating in following areas off U.S. Pacific Coast - (A) Columbia River 4630 N. (B) Cape Mendocino 4030 N. (C) Santa Cruz 3700 N. One vessel has been torpedoed and abandoned off Cape Mendocino. (B.A.D., 1129R/21 to N.S.H.Q.Ottawa, C.O.P.C. (R) Admty.)

S.Atlantic. Estimated approximate positions of U/Bs. south of 30° N. No indication of any U/B in this area. (D.D.I.C. 1436A/21).

Estimated approx. positions of U.Boats North of 30°. (D.D.I.C. 1440A/21).

1637A. There is one eastbound U-Boat in approx. 045° N. 012° W. (F.O.S., 1637A/21 to Submarines on Patrol in Area A).

South Atlantic. 200 Sqdn. Hudson arrival Bathurst from Gibraltar sighted 1 U-boat 1120-LBPH 313 and second U-Boat periscope depth 1615-LVNT 0508 Hudson retiring from convoy at 1800 directed to attack but landed before receiving signal. (A.H.Q., W.A. 1705/21).

1130 (Med.) At 1130 G.M.T./21 1 Submarine on surface in 037° 31' N. 007° 46' E. course 132° 8 knots. (N.O.I.C.Malta 1810B/21 to Med.Fleet).

2315 Following has been read:- 1 S/M N 70 E. Cape Negro 4. (ARCTIC RANGER 2315/21 to Gibraltar Port Wave).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Attacked.

By A/C 19/12

(1) At 2141/19 in position 265° Cape Spartel 2½ Swordfish, at 800 feet after ASV contact at four miles, sighted U-boat on surface. Attacked from 80 with depth charges. Result not observed. Destroyer hunted without success.

By HERMIONE 20/12

(2) At 1114/20 HERMIONE attacked doubtful contact in position 115° Europa Point 3. (F.O.C.N.A. 0002A/21 to Admty.)

U/B prisoners' intelligence, use of Vigo.

S.O.(I) Gibraltar 1052A/20th to Admty. and STORK 2100A/20 neither to B.N.A. Madrid. Prisoners from U (?8) have also volunteered information their boat fuelled and provisioned from German Merchant Ship in Vigo night 14-15/12 Name vessel not obtainable but description indicates probable German BESSEL.
(2) In view of agitation now obtaining concerning visits U.Boats to Vigo suggest maximum pressure should be brought to bear on Spanish Gov. with object having the 3 German ships in refuelling refuge at Vigo removed.
(3) In face of Germany Freighter shortage there appears no reason to retain these ships at Vigo other than to employ them as supply ships for U.Boats. (F.O.C.N.A., 1246A/21, to Admty. (R) N.A.Madrid).

By A/C

Swordfish attacked and sank German U-Boat in position 330° Spartel 13 miles at 0320 A/21.
(2) A/S V contact obtained from 3½ miles at height of 800 feet. Aircraft closed, contact being held until U-Boat sighted from a height of 60 feet as expected 200 yards on port beam. Normal attack from astern 3 depth charges, 2 at 25 feet, 3rd at 50 feet. (Note:-W/T version of this signal says 12 feet). Depth charges straddled U-Boat (corrupt group) course, centre depth charge exploded immediately beneath her.
(3) Flares dropped by aircraft disclosed large patch of oil but no U-Boat. Flame float dropped to indicate position to patrol vessel MYOSOTIS who subsequently picked up one survivor believed to be the first Lieut.
(4) Weather clear, dark night, no moon.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1246A/21 to Admty.)

By A/C

U/B damaged (STORK, 1355A/21) See S/M's Reported.

By A/C

Following has been read. Have attacked enemy with bombs level. One near miss, no change of course, E.T.A. 1430. (A/C using call-sign K7TM 1355/21).

By A/C's.

(1) Swordfish ASV A/S Patrol 1830/20 - 0930/21 area 15 miles radius Spartel. 1 U Boat attacked

/and sunk...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Attacked.

By A/C's (contd.)

sunk 330 Spartel 13 at 0316/21 1 survivor.
(4) 3 Hudsons A/S Sweep to East as far as 01° E.
1 U boat attacked 35.22 N. 03.30 W. damage unknown.
(A.H.Q.Gibraltar, 2045/21).

By A/C.

(1) My 1246A/21 refers.
(2) At 1110/21 in 35.22 N. 03.40 W. Hudson at 500 feet sighted U-boat distance 8 miles. Attacked with depth charges, no result. (F.O.C.N.A., 2350A/21, to Admty.)

By U.S.S. HAMILTON.

At 1100/21 59.01 N., 34.02 W., 300' E.X.S. of Cape Farewell. Result unknown.

By U.S.S. LUDLOW.

At 1220/21 59.01 N., 34.02 W., 300' E.X.S. of Cape Farewell. Result unknown.
(D.S., 839) See 22/12.

MOST SECRET

22.12.1941.
Monday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

C. in C. H.F. instructed C.S.1 at 2241A today that in order to reduce the strain on ships patrol "White" could be discontinued unless he received information which indicated that the patrol should be re-instituted.

It is reported (B.2) that the GNEISENAU, SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN are fit to sail. None of them was damaged in the daylight attack on 18/12.

Operation "Anklet".

ARETHUSA, SOMALI, ASHANTI, BEDOUIN, KRAKOWIAK, KUJAWIAK, SCOTT, HARRIER, SPEEDWELL, HALCYON, ACANTHUS, BLACK RANGER, EGLANTINE, JAUNTY, and GUDRUN MAERSK sailed from Scapa at 1221 today.

CHITRAL, ALAUNIA, WORCESTERSHIRE, PRETORIA CASTLE and EMPIRE FULMAR, sailed from the Clyde this evening for Freetown, escorted by GARLAND and SULTAN HISSAR (destroyer). The latter is for transfer to the Turks; the A.M.Cs. are for foreign stations. EMPIRE FULMAR has military stores for Middle East.

British Air Operations.

Coastal Command aircraft carried out successful attacks on enemy shipping off the coast of Norway today.

Mining.

Several magnetic and acoustic mines were detonated today in the Humber area. S.S. STYLIANOS CHANDRIS was mined and sunk at the mouth of the Humber at 1945 today.

/Measures ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining - Contd.

Measures approved today to counter enemy mine-laying in the Thames Estuary are detailed in Antacor London 1815/22.

North Atlantic.

COWSLIP ran ashore near Gibraltar today and was extensively damaged. Complete repairs will take 2 to 3 months.

Mediterranean.

Mines were laid in air raids on Malta last night.

Two good S/Ms. are to be sent to Singapore as quickly as possible, to provide a British nucleus, TRUSTY and TRUANT are to be sailed as early as possible.

NETRAVATI (sloop) was in action off Jibuti this morning with Vichy Naval Oiler ELORN which was apparently trying to escape with a submarine (VENGEUR). There was no result and ELORN and VENGEUR returned to harbour. NETRAVATI had no casualties.

PERSEUS is overdue from patrol since 0600/19 and must be considered lost.

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

China.

Hong Kong. In a situation report up to 1800 local time today it was reported that the enemy had landed fresh troops on the N.E. coast of the island and had been attacking continuously all last night and today with land forces, mortars, gunfire and dive-bombing. Our troops are very tired and have suffered heavy casualties. The island is now split into 3 parts. The water and transport situation is critical and ammunition supply cannot be replenished as required. Oil installations at Texa Co., A.P.C. Mau Tau Kok have been destroyed, but that at Lai Chi Kok cannot be destroyed as a large civil hospital is near.
Practically all naval personnel are now ashore and fighting alongside the soldiers.

Borneo. It is reported that the enemy arrived at Danau in Brunei at 0830 today.

Philippines. Air R/C shows 1 cruiser, 3 destroyers and 12 transports in the Gulf of Davao. It is reported that 70 to 80 enemy transports are off Lingayen Gulf.

Wake. Japanese forces landed yesterday from several transports. 2 Japanese destroyers ran aground.

U-Boat Campaign.

S.S. STOREY reports being unsuccessfully attacked by torpedo off Point Arguillo, 60 miles N.W. of Santa Barbara, Cal., and S.S. PANAMA EXPRESS was twice unsuccessfully attacked by torpedoes last night 30 miles west of San Diego.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Proposed U.S. Depot Ship at Hvalfiord.

Admty 1049A/18. Concur in N.O.I.C. Iceland 1638N/20. Assistance with boiler cleaning is imperative and it may be difficult for U.S. Navy to provide satisfactory boiler cleaning and repair parties. It may therefore be necessary to accommodate a Royal Naval party of about 3 Officers and 100 Ratings. Provision of necessary D.C. power requires confirmation. Consider C. in C. W.A. should be consulted. Former messages are being passed to him. (C. in C. H.F., 1201A/22 to Admty).

LA MOQUEUSE. REINE DES FLOTS.

Following instructions are issued with the concurrence of Admiral Commanding F.N.F.L. LA MOQUEUSE and REINE DES FLOTS are required to proceed to Aden and Beyrouth respectively. The latter is expected to be ready at Plymouth about 24/12.
2. Speed of slowest ship is 8½ knots.
3. Vessels will sail in company from Milford Haven as arranged by C. in C. W.A.
4. C. in C. Plymouth is requested to sail REINE DES FLOTS for Milford Haven when ready.
5. C. in C. W.A. is requested:-
(a) To sail LA MOQUEUSE for Liverpool for stores as soon as possible and subsequently to join REINE DES FLOTS at Milford Haven.
(b) To sail and route both vessels to Freetown.
(D.O.D. H., 2004A/22).

Movements.

VANQUISHER, WITCH, VOLUNTEER.

VANQUISHER and WITCH sailed in accordance with C. in C. W.A 1832A/21. VOLUNTEER will follow on completion of her oiling.
(VANQUISHER, 0016A/22).

LANCASTER, NEWARK.

Arrived LANCASTER and NEWARK. (N.O.I.C. Port Z.A. 1145/22).

WIDGEON.

Delayed 24 hours at Southend owing to fog.
(N.C.S.O. Thames, 1408A/22).

RODNEY.

Scapa arrival 1216 RODNEY. WORCESTER, FORESTER, MONTROSE in Company.
(A.C.O.S., 1432A/22 to A.C.I.C.)

FAULKNOR, FORESIGHT.

FAULKNOR and FORESIGHT E.T.A. Scapa 0500/23.
(Capt. D.8, 1622A/22).

/NIGERIA...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. - Contd.

NIGERIA. — Your 1542/21. In view of undesirability of ships being under way off East Coast between sunset and total darkness NIGERIA is to be sailed after dark on 23/12.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 1707/22 to F.O.I.C. Tyne).

RENOWN. — Hvalfjord arrival RENOWN, VERITY, WALKER, WITHERINGTON 1245. (A.C.I.C., 1737N/22).

CHITRAL,
ALAUNIA,
WORCESTERSHIRE
PRETORIA CASTLE,
EMPIRE SULTAN,
GARLAND,
SULTAN HISSAR. — My 1544A/21. Sailed.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 1756A/22).

CORINTHIAN. — Please cancel my 1642/22. (F.O.I.C. London, 1944/22 to C. in C. Nore).

S/Ms. from Biscay Patrol. —
A. S/Ms. at Falmouth and proceeding to Falmouth are to remain there till further orders.
B. 0.21 and 0.10 are to be ordered to proceed to Milford Haven.
C. 0.9 is to be sailed for Milford Haven.
D. S/Ms. proceeding to Falmouth and Milford Haven are to fuel on arrival and remain at 4 hours notice for patrol.
E. F.O.I.C. Falmouth pass to ALECTO and BREDA.
(F.O.S., 2336A/22).

Operations.

Denmark Straits Patrol. —
My 1226Z/21. For SWEETBRIAR read VERONICA.
(C.S.1., 00342/23).
Request you will arrange reliefs on patrol "White" as convenient to you.
(C. in C. H.F., 1411A/22 to C.S.1)
Sailed ANEMONE and VERONICA at 1400 for Patrol.
(A.C.I.C., 1737N/22).
Patrol "White".
A. Intend to sail in NORFOLK at 1500N/23 to relieve BERWICK.
B. BERWICK is to leave patrol a.m./24 for Hvalfjord C. Unless otherwise ordered BERWICK is to sail P.M./28, to relieve NORFOLK.
(C.S.1., 1543N/22 to C. in C. H.F.)

/My...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary

23.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Denmark Straits Patrol - Contd.

My 1226Z/21.
A. Corvettes ordered to patrol to N.E. of minefield in line of 151 10 519 on 16 mile beat parallel to ice edge. Northern bank about 8 miles from ice. S.W. end of beat 30 miles from minefield.
B. Both ships fitted with type 271.
C. Routed coastwise to (?Straummales?) thence East of minefield. E.T.A. on patrol a.m./24.
D. BERWICK is to make contact with corvettes in daylight at intervals of not more than 48 hours to give them their position.
(C.S.1., 2022Z/21 to BERWICK, A.C.I.C. Reptd. ANEMONE, VERONICA).
To reduce strain on ships, Patrol "White" can be discontinued until other instructions are received from me or unless you receive information which indicates it should be re-instituted.
(C. in C. H.F., 2246A/22 to C.S.1)

East Coast Patrols.

Arrival M.G.B.16 from patrol.
(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1005A/22).
COTTESMORE and HAMBLEDON carrying out patrols A and B respectively tonight.
Patrol A from H.3 to East Dudgeon Patrol B from East Dudgeon to 57D Buoy.
Trawlers on patrol in Q.Z.S. 277 from Sheringham to 59A inclusive. (C. in C. Nore, 1052A/20).
Arrival M.G.Bs. 88, 86, 91 in company from patrol. (N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1305A/22 to F.O.I.C. Yarmouth).
Departure M.Ls. 150 and 152 on patrol.
(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1421A/22).
My 1052A/22. COTTESMORE on passage South due to reach patrol A 0200/23. Speed 23 knots.
(C. in C. Nore, 1521A/22).
On completion of patrol A return Sheerness.
(C. in C. Nore, 1549A/22 to COTTESMORE).
Brightlingsea Aumiliary Patrols returning Brightlingsea owing to visibility.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich, 1650A/22).
On completion of patrol tonight proceed Humber and await further orders.
EGLINTON will be sailing to carry out patrol night 23/24. (Capt. D.16, 2200A/22 to HAMBLEDON)

Patrol of Q.Z.S.271.

3 A/S Trawlers patrolling Q.Z.S.271 returning St. Helens dawn.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 1417A/22).

/Operation...

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations. -- Contd.

Operation "Archer".

Operation "Archer" Appendix B. Add para. 15. If it becomes necessary to break W/T silence to make an urgent message which affects Force P, it should be made to Whitehall W/T Station in usual manner. If W/T conditions permit, 3000 k/cs. should be used as KENYA will be keeping watch on this wave. If another wave has to be used, the signal should also be broadcast on 3000 k/cs. for benefit of Force P.
(C.S.10. 1451A/22 to TUNA).

Operation Q.N.

My 1545A/21. Q.N. postponed further 24 hours. (C. in C. Nore, 1533A/22 to F.O.I.C. Yarmouth)

Operation "Anklet".

I will not complete oiling until 1800 WHEATLAND will be ready at 1600. (PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE, 1535A/22)
Scapa departures 1221/22. ARETHUSA, SOMALI, ASHANTI, BEDOUIN, KRAKOWIAK, KUJAWIAK, SCOTT, HARRIER, SPEEDWELL, HALCYON, ACANTHUS, BLACK RANGER, EGLANTINE, JAUNTY, GUDRUN MAERSK. (A.C.O.S. 1719A/22).
Intend to sail 1300/23 in accordance with A.J.19. (PRINCESS CHARLOTTE, 1836A/22).
Following received from N.O.I.C. Lerwick begins: PRINCESS CHARLOTTE, WHEATLAND arrived Sullomvoe 1417A/22. Ends. (R.A.D. H.F., 1846A/22 to S.O. Force J).

Enemy Air Activity.

LUCELLUM (Bombed 19/12).

Arrived Holyhead 0330/21 Rescue Tugs AMSTERDAM and CHERBOURGEOISE 3 with LUCELLUM in tow. (N.O.I.C. Holyhead, 1645A/22).

Mining.

Yarmouth.

S.A. Sweeper detonated acoustic mine at 0755/22 Details. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1001A/22)

Operation Q.O.

Weather permitting propose following programme for 23/12. Details. (S.O. M/S F. 9 1410A/22 to C. in C. Nore)
Your 1410A/22. Approved but Flotillas are not to proceed until ordered. (C. in C. Nore, 2216A/22 to M/S 9.)

/Thames...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining - Contd.

Thames Estuary.

Marked enemy air activity over the Thames Estuary between 1740 and 1820/21. Some 20 enemy A/C are thought to have taken part, but only three are believed to have flown west of a line joining Margate and Burnham. Of these, 2 laid mines on the southern edge of the channel between East Spile and B.1. buoys.
Planes were received by a great volume of fire from patrol vessels and ships of convoys fog bound in the Oaze and Barrow Deeps. At 1756 QUEEN EAGLE near B.3. Buoy reports that she believes she damaged an aircraft by 3 inch Harvey and gun fire, aircraft appeared to be listing and turned to S.S.W. losing height.
New fixed shore barrage was opened on aircraft which appeared to be approaching boom from eastward. (S.O. T.L.D.F., 1621/22)
Following measures approved to counter minelaying in Thames Estuary after meeting this morning. Details. (Antacor, London 1815/22) See Lion Copy.

BENMACDHUI (British, 6869 Tons) mined on 21/12.

BENMACDHUI 62 crew landed, 2 men missing. (Capt. Base, Grimsby, 1643A/22).
Struck Mine at 2145/21, 8 cables 90° from H.5. Buoy. Details. (F.O. Humber, 1813A/22).

Operation "Tincture".

Request you will repeat operation "Tincture" by p.m./25 in the manner described in my 1207A/10/9. (D.M.S., 1728A/22 to F.O.I.C. Milford Haven)

Humber.

Following 4 Magnetic and 6 Acoustic Mines detonated today. Details. (F.O. Humber, 2101A/22)

Enemy Intelligence.

GNEISENAU, SCHARNHORST, PRINZ EUGEN.

Following has been received graded B.2:-
State of Warships at Brest on 21/12. GNEISENAU, SCHARNHORST, and PRINZ EUGEN are fit to sail. Daylight bombing raid on 18/12 was magnificent but unlucky. 15 bombs fell close or between docks, one fell in SCHARNHORST dock. Gate of SCHARNHORST dock damaged but ship can be undocked in a few days' time. GNEISENAU due to undock 1200Z/23 probably for tests. Redocking of PRINZ EUGEN was according to programme.
(D.D.I.C., 2159A/22).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Navigational.

Sound of Sleat.

Admiralty 1321A/20. It is considered that fish carriers should not use Sound of Sleat as a routine. When carriers cannot make the passage west of Skye permission should be obtained from N.O.I.C. Lochalsh and E.T.A. given.
Passage of Sound of Sleat can only be made during daylight hours and patrols at either entrance should be contacted before entering.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 0939/22 to Admty).

Q.Z.S.285.

Request Q.Z.Y. instructing shipping to keep to the Northern half of the Channel in Q.Z.S. 285 when between B.1. and East Spile buoys.
(C. in C. Nore, 1140A/22).

Hammonds Knoll.

Superintendent Trinity House reports:-
Normal conditions restored to Hammonds Knoll light buoy. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1244A/22)

H.10 Buoy.

H.10 buoy missing from station.
(Hydrographer, 1737A/22).

AHAMO Wreck Buoy.

Wreck marking light buoy marking wreck in 53° 22' 28" N., 01° 00' 04" E., light extinguished.
(Hydrographer, 2349A/22).

B.7. Buoy.

B.7. buoy damaged and light extinguished.
(Hydrographer, 2350A/22).

Casualties & Defects.

EMPIRE CHIEF, EMPIRE MARLOWE.

EMPIRE CHIEF is proceeding under own steam towards Reykjavik. Continue in company to assist S.S. EMPIRE MARLOWE broken down in 58° 58' N., 26° W., at 0851/20. TRAIL standing by. Tug FREEBOOTER is also proceeding from Reykjavik.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 0235A/22 to SNOWDROP, TENACITY)

KING SOL.

Steering gear broken down. Temp. reps. unsuccessful. Endeavour to use jury steering from windlass. My position at 0600 is 058° 24' N., 6° 47' W. (KING SOL, 0605/22 to WANDERER).

STORK.

Collision damage. (STORK, 1053A/22, see U-boat Campaign).

NEWARK.

My 1603/16 and 1832/20. Intend sailing NEWARK at 1730 today for docking at Scapa.
(R.A.M. 1058/22.)
Sailed NEWARK. (N.O.I.C. Port Z.A. 1732/22).

/HEARTSEASE...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 22.12.1921. Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects - Contd.

HEARTSEASE. Arrival HEARTSEASE for fuel and repairs to main bearings. (N.O.I.C. Aultbea, 1317A/22).

CONQUEROR. Intend to proceed to Greenock 1030/23 in accordance with my 1600A/19/12 to Admiralty. (CONQUEROR, 1400A/22).

Unknown Ship. Intercept 1341 G.M.T. S O S begins:- B Q X J 28 (taking bearing) taking water. Bearing 322° good quality 375 k/cs. (Port Patrick Radio, 1412/22).

VOLUNTEER. Main steam joint after end expansion gland starboard engine joint blown out. Attempted repair unsuccessful. My P.C.S. 054° 05' N., 010° 26' W., 010° 14 knots (?up to) Moville. (VOLUNTEER, 2000A/22).

Shipping & Convoys

H.G.76. C. in C. W.A. 1843A/21. Sailed VANOC. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 0545A/22). H.G.76. Omit A. Steer direct to B. (C. in C. W.A., 0932A/22 to Escorts H.G.76).

C.T.8. Intend sailing Clyde portion of C.T.8 consisting of BERGENSFJORD and Polish Destroyer BURZA passing Clyde Boom at 2200A/23 to R/V with Liverpool portion and BEVERLEY and ROCKINGHAM from Londonderry at 0930A/24 in 000°. Inistrahull 14 miles, thence as in Admiralty 1508A /16. 2. BURZA return Clyde from R/V. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0954A/22).

O.N.48. O.N.48 report your P.C. and S. and expected time of arrival M.O.M.P. (C. in C. W.A., 1010A/22 to CALDWELL) O.N.48. Ship No. 2876. Request reason why independent route positions have been lettered F-G-K-S-T A.M.0945A/11 para VI gives initial letter. Subsequent letters should follow in sequence. Latitude and longitude of F not understood. Attention is also called to N.C.S.O. Mersey's 1230A/23/9. The appropriate collective distinguishing signal should be inserted on Outward Routeing Form. (D.T.D., 1611A/22 to N.C.S.O. Belfast).

/F.N.85...

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. - Contd.

F.N.85,
F.N.86.

As F.N.83 is only 6 miles ahead intend anchoring F.N.85 for 4 hours between B.4. and B.5. buoy. (LOWESTOFT, 1105A/22).
Your 1515A/22. Visibility shows no sign of improving. Intend weighing at dawn and proceeding at 9½ knots of which 3 ships in company are capable. (LOWESTOFT, 1610A/22 to C. in C. Nore).
F.N.85 cancelled owing to fog.
(C. in C. Nore, 1704A/22).
Your 1610A/22. You are to order all ships of F.N.85 in company to remain anchored until over taken by F.N.86 tomorrow Tuesday when they are to form astern F.N.86 becoming part of that convoy.
2. Take WOOLSTON under your orders and proceed day to Rosyth at your best speed.
(C. in C. Nore, 1706A/22 to LOWESTOFT).

H.X.163.

Average speed 8.7 knots till 11/12. Gales and hove-to 11th 12th and 13th December. All ships now arrived. (D.T.D. 1610A/22 to Opnav).

EMPIRE FULMAR, SULTAN HISSAR, ACTIVE.

A.M.1307A/11 amended by A.M.1729A/18 and A.M.1712/A/19. Sailed. S. of A 12 knots. Routed as in C. in C. W.A., 1027A/20. Expected time of passing into N.A. Station 0115A/27. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 1754A/22).

S.C.58.

Heartiest congratulations on bringing home safely the ships of your convoy S.C.58.
(C. in C. W.A., 1804/22 to Rear-Admiral E.O. Cochrane).
S.C.58. Average speed 7.1. knots, hove-to and split into two portions 11/12 December.
All ships arrived except NIDARDAL which foundered in about 21° W.
(D.T.D., 1915A/22 to Opnav).

B.B.Convoys.

The following limitations in numbers are proposed for tankers in B.B. convoys.
A. During dark nights - No limit.
B. During moon period - 3 Tankers for each A/A ship of escort. (A.C.N.S. T., 1846A/22 to C. in C. W.A.)

H.X.163.

Many congratulations on bringing safely to the U.K. all the ships of your Convoy H.X.163.
(C. in C. W.A., 2053/22 to Rear Admiral E. Manners)

/Humber...

MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. - Contd.

Humber.
Area L.F.

Request authorities for routeing ships to the Humber may be informed that an area for ships anchoring at the Humber L/F in the event of the Port being closed is established and is known as Area L.F. Area L.F. is as follows.
(F.O. Humber, 2145A/22).

C.W.62.

My 1638A/21. Owing to four days of fog and consequent non-arrival of Merchant Vessels C.W. 62 postponed further 24 hours.
(C. in C. Nore, 2218A/22).

Lake Steamers.

Pass to N.C.S.Os. In spite of efforts to find more suitable employment for them, some of the lake steamers are still employed on the East Coast. In light condition these vessels are extremely difficult to handle. With reference to T.D. Memo D/1/051 dated 6th December, an exception may be made of these ships and the Masters of them advised not to sail if the weather forecast is bad.
(D.T.D. 2321A/22 to Cs. in C. Rosyth, Nore).

PASTEUR
(T.C.16).

On arrival of PASTEUR Master is to be questioned as to why he broke away from convoy and proceeded independently. (D.T.D., 2322A/22 to N.C.S.O.Clyde)

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

French Shipping.	Passing 21/12. Eastward VILLE DU HAVRE, CHELMA, CROIX, all full. Westward 20/12, CAP BLANC, CAPITAINE LUIGI, MENHUR, BRAZ, full. VILLE D'ORAN in Ballast. CAPITAINE ARMAND. (V.A.C.N.A., 0925/22 to Admty. for M.E.W.)
UNA, P.35, O.24.	Anticipate sailing UNA p.m./26 and P.35 p.m./27 for Malta and O.24 p.m./29 for Malta and onward passage. C. in C. Med. pass to Capt. (S) 1. N.O.i/c Malta pass to Capt. (S) 10. (F.O.C.N.A., 1038A/22 to C. in C. Med.)
MARSDALE.	My 1604A/12 and your 1350A/21 not to C.O.A.C. Halifax. MARSDALE delayed and docking at St. John, N.B. (S.O.W.P., 1040A/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Ponta Delgada.	My 1055/19 (Re Timor incident reaction in Portugal.) Situation here returning to normal. (Ponta Delgada, 1155/22 to D.N.I. for E.P.S.)
H.G. 77	Your 1630A/21. Undesirable to delay sailing H.G.77 on account of escort situation and desirability of using moonlight periods for these convoys. Request you report number of ships which will be excluded if original date is adhered to and whether it will be possible to sail these ships as a separate convoy to R/V with S.L.97 leaving Freetown 5/1. (A.C.N.S.(T), 1313/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)
COWSLIP. Aground.	COWSLIP grounded on Punta-Ah-Boassa, 3 miles east of Malabata at 0505/22. Refloated at 1510 /22 and brought into harbour. (F.O.C.N.A., 1314A/22 to N.A. Madrid.)
MARSDALE, MARAN.	Situation report No.3. Situation 2004A/22 (i) MARSDALE patrol B X 2. (ii) MARAN 40.00 30.11 236° 12. (F.O.C.N.A., 1328A/22 to N.A. Stn.) Cancel reference to MARSDALE. Sailing has been delayed. (F.O.C.N.A., 1247A/23.)

/WESTCOTT ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic - Contd.

WESTCOTT, P.39.

WESTCOTT (? in) approx. position 042° (? 00') 014° 00' at 0800A/22 is routed through 185° Cape St. Vincent 15, speed 15 knots. You are not to pass through 039° (? 20') 011° 20' before 0200A/23. She has been told to keep 30 miles clear of you.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1436A/22 to P.39.)
(? Your) 1140 (N.T. in W.R.) acknowledged. My P.C. and S. are at 2100A/22, 040° 36' N. 013° 34' W. 156° 13½ knots, altering to 102° at 1330A/23. E.T.A. Gibraltar 1000A/24.
(WESTCOTT, 1730A/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)

COZALLA, (ex-SERAFIN TOPIC.)

America reports present painting COZALLA as follows. No name visible.
America reports COZALLA returned to Algiers night of 21st, believed owing to fear of British attack. She may now be given French Air Escort. Cargo on arrival Algiers believed to be minerals, believed to have loaded more minerals there.
(Brit. Consul, Tangier, 1510/22, 2010/22 to S.O.I. Gib.)
O.I.C. Comment. Ships is suspected of having part cargo of rubber.

French Shipping.

Following is a repetition of my 1725A/20 (begins). Gibraltar 0900 Light Cruiser FANTASQUE, S.S. CAP BLANC full deck cargo Mica Mediates. P.1033. Survey vessel ESTAFETTE, S.S. CAPITAINE LUIGI full deck cargo motor transport, MENHIR BRAZ, laden, VILLE D'ORAN, Light, trawler CAPITAINE ARMAND Westbound 1725A/20. (ends).
(S.O.I. Gib., 1513A/22 to Admty., etc.)
Gibraltar 1210 armed trawler LA TOULONNAISE S.S. IMERETHIE II, MAROC, both laden, SURVILLE, MARICE, both full, eastbound.
(S.O.I. Gib., 1655A/22 to Admty., C. in C. Med.)

SULTAN HISSAR.

Request arrangements may be made for SULTAN HISSAR to fuel at Ponta Delgada on 28/12 amount of fuel required 300 tons.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 1758A/22 to N.C.S.O. Ponts Delgada.)

MIRROR, Cable operation.

My 1948/18/11 and 1249/19. Cable & Wireless now consider diversion should be carried out on Vigo-Gibraltar Cable instead of Vigo-Lisbon. This is agreed especially as it should shorten operation. MIRROR should effect joint where La Panne-Lisbon and Vigo-Gibraltar cables cross in approx. 10° 21' W. 38° 44' N.
(D.S.D., 2115A/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

S.L. 95. (?) TOTLAND being detached in accordance with your 1345Z/16, E.T.A. Ponta Delgada 0800Z/23. Request she may fuel (? here). Weather report. (WESTON, 0400Z/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

Routes of U.S. Ships. Your 1330Z/20.
Movements and estimated daily position of all merchant vessels (including U.S. flag ships) in area North of 20° S. and West of 26° W. are reported by Admty. to Navy Dept. Washington, and N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, by means of a daily "Grid" signal.
2. Gridded chart with numbered rectangles measuring 2½° of latitude by 2½° of longitude is used and method of reporting rectangles through which each vessel will pass on successive days indicates approx. routes.
3. N.C.S.O's are not required to repeat routes to Chatfold but S.Os.(I) should include routes of U.S. flag vessels in inter-station route signals to S.Os.(I) of contiguous stations concerned in usual manner.
4. Future policy regarding exchange of information of routes of U.S. flag ships is under discussion.
(D.T.D., 0553A/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

ILEX. C. in C. S.A. 1401/20, completion date cannot be given until starboard H.P. Turbine has been opened for examination at end of December.
(F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 0800Z/22 to C. in C. A.W.I., etc.)

Belgian Troops, proposed for B.W.A. Your 59461 (M.O.4) 21/12. My G/17347 12/12 (begins). Your 97753 (M.O.4) 24/11. I consider it very desirable to invite Belgians to despatch Belgian Brigade group to British West Africa at earliest opportunity.
(2) Shipping difficulties are such that I am most anxious to ensure that Belgian troops will be available within my command when wanted.
(4) Request authority to issue formal invitation to Belgian C. in C. accordingly. (Ends).
(G.O.C. in C. W.A., 0830/22 to W.O.)

Simonstown. Proposal for new jetty to increase berthing accommodation.
(Capt. Supt. Simonstown, 0911Z/22 to Admty.)
See Lion Copy.

/LOSMAR ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - Contd.

LOSMAR.	Overdue shipping. My 1009/16 LOSMAR arrived Durban. (S.O.I. Capetown, 0921B/22 to Admty., etc.)
CANTON, CILICIA.	(?) CANTON sails p.m./22 to patrol in area H.33 (?) CILICIA sails 23/12 to join CANTON. Thereafter ships will operate in company with objects of interception of possible surface raiders (?) from North and Axis shipping from the South. (C. in C. S.A., 1259Z/22 to Admty.)
CHALLENGER.	Hydrographic instruction No. 7/41 completed. 14 days required to finish tracing and printing etc. (II) Partial collapse of furnace in No. 2 boiler now occurred and prevents its use for main steaming. Repairs not possible before refit. No sign of trouble in No. 1 boiler. (III) Intend leaving Bathurst for Kuntaur, river Gambia, 26/12 and there clean No.1 boiler whilst in fresh water clear bull of fouling. (IV) Propose returning to Bathurst 10/1 in time to sail for U.K. with expected departure of escort group on 13/1 or two days before date ordered to sail. Anticipate speed through water ?(8)½ knots. Endurance 8000 miles. (CHALLENGER, 1442N/22 to C. in C. S.A.)
Movement Summary.	2000/22. ASTURIAS patrol carried out along C and D. BULOLO patrols K.32 and K.33. DERBYSHIRE 033° 20' S. 015° 40' E. 105° 13½ knots. LAVENDER patrols off Roberts Port. STARWORT patrols off 006° 07' N. 010° 23' W. SURPRISE with CAMBRIA repairing cables 19 miles north of Island of St. Vincent. TULIP 008° 15' N. 027° 15' W. 106° 8, 12 knots. RUNSWICK BAY 006° 06' N. 011° 50' W. 130°, 8 knots. RAPIDOL off Freetown southbound. BADSWORTH 010° 05' N. 015° 40' W. 316° 16 knots. WOODRUFF with RANGITATA from Lagos to Freetown. ROCKROSE JASMINE 020° N. (?021°) W. 159°, 9 knots. CANTON off Freetown. (C. in C. S.A., 1607Z/22 to S.A. Squadron.)
2 Vichy Officers.	Your 1843/7. Vichy Officers should not be moved for the present as other negotiations for their exchange are in progress. (Head of M., 1647A/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

/PIERRE LOTI ...

MOST SECRET

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - Contd.

PIERRE LOTI, collision, ship sunk.

Following received from Harbour Master (R.O.) Port Harcourt, Nigeria: PIERRE LOTI arrived 1030/21. Master reported collision with MMAX (Not identifiable) in 004° (?10') N. 007° 24' E. at 0425/20. MMAX was taken in tow but foundered in 004° (? 57' or 14')30" N. 007° 12'30" E. at 1455 G.M.T./20 in 8 fathoms of water. 62 surviving, one since died, 2 Africans missing. Survivors leaving p.m. today for Lagos in LAGOSIAN due 23/12. Wreck dangerous to navigation.
(N.O.I.C. Lagos, 1700Z/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

INDOMITABLE.

My 1155/16. INDOMITABLE is proceeding direct to Capetown from position D left Trinidad 17/12. E.T.A. 1600Z/1/1.
(C. in C. S.A., 1701Z/22 to R.A.S.A.D.)

AURIGNY.

AURIGNY on fire in New Port, Buenos Aires.
(Asst. S.O.I. Montevideo, 1835Z/22 to Admty.)

VISUT KASATRI NAWA. (Siamese)

My 1742Z/10. Siamese ship VISUT KASATRI NAWA sailed from San Francisco Do Sul for Durban 1800 G.M.T./21st.
(S.O.I. Montevideo, 1924Z/22 to Admty.)

ATHENE.

A.T. 1635A/19, para. 2. Destination of ATHENE is Karachi, not Bombay.
(D.O.D.(F), 1930A/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

AMARANTHUS.

1421/9. Intend AMARANTHUS to sail with convoy S.L.96 and continue with ocean escort to U.K. for (refit?).
(C. in C. S.A., 2011Z/22 to Admty.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

UPRIGHT, M/V's hit.	At 0112/13, UPRIGHT fired 4 torpedoes at 2 north-bound M/V's with overlapping continuous silhouettes escorted by 1 destroyer in Gulf of Taranto. 3 hits on leading ship and 1 on the other. (D.O.R. 22/12).
HARBOE JENSEN, A/C attack.	Following received, from S.S. HARBOE JENSEN. Description seaplane believed to be Fiat attacked Rosetta Light bearing 140° 7 miles, one man wounded (Nore W/T, 0545/22, to Admty.)
PIETRA LIGURE. (Italian).	Refloated and (to-day?) seized in lawful prize. (N.O.I.C. Massawa, 0900Z/22, to S.N.O. Red Sea.)
THUNDERBOLT.	Regret THUNDERBOLT is 2 hours late due to breakdown. (Capt. S.1, 1130B/22, to LEGION).
VARLAAM AVANESOV, SAKHALIN.	Following from Adm. Kelly. In view of sinking of U.S.S.R.Oiler AVANESOV off Cape Baba and Waxing Moon I have postponed sailing of Oiler SAKHALIN to wait more favourable conditions. (N.A.Ankara, 1211B/22, to C. in C. Med.) (W.D. Note. - According to D.S.840, correct name of first oiler should be VARLAAM AVANESOV).
221 Sqdn., Wellingtons.	A.M. 1219/8 para. 6. Hoped 221 Sqdn. of Wellington aircraft trained in A/S warfare will reinforce Middle East shortly. Aircraft are fitted A.S.V. and carry depth charges. Following details may be helpful. (D.A/S.W., 1242A/22, to C. in C. Med.) See Lion Copy.
Enemy Units.	1 Destroyer 1 large vessel 6000 tons 32.20 N. 16.20 E. Course 3 (?4) 1° (?9 knots). (Med. A/C Duty L. 1305B/22 to Hal Far). 3 Merchant vessels one destroyer (3) miles North of Miserath going towards Tripoli. (Malta 1516B/22, to Med. Fleet).
Jibuti.	Submarine and ELORN returned after attempted escape. (F.F.N.L.O. Aden, 1410Z/22, to F.N.F.L., London).
Libya.	Military Situation Report. (C. in C. M.E., 1545/22 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.

/M.N.B.D.O. ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 22.12.1941. Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - contd.

M.N.B.D.O. After departure of Anti-Aircraft Brigade Group referred to in your 1108A 13th following units of 1st Royal Marines Group will remain in Egypt:- (List and numbers).
(ii) Is it policy to reform this M.N.B.D.O.? This can only be done by (?relieving) forces ordered to Ceylon as details remaining have insufficient experience to form basis of new organization.
(iii) If not intended to reform it is particularly desired to retain 11 R.M.Bns. suitably organized with 20 per cent. reinforcements and personnel for a small base depot and necessary transport. This force would be used to provide (?relief of) raiding forces. The advantages of employing these R.Marines are that they (?would have) (?a) nucleus of men with sea experience who could embark at very short notice to carry out raids as opportunity offers without calling on Army.
(iv) Further requested, in order to release N.C.O's and R.Marines trained in sea service now being employed in shore establishments, approx. 200 non-specialist ranks of M.N.B.D.O. should be retained on Station. This would enable immediate reliefs to be provided for ranks now on home service roster in seagoing ship. (C. in C. Med., 1600B/22 to Admty.)

PERSEUS overdue. PERSEUS is now overdue since 0600/19 and must be considered lost. PERSEUS was not heard of from time of leaving harbour on 26/11 for Benghazi. She was directed to patrol various positions in Ioanian sea as required by general situation and finally to patrol to Argostoli to leave there to arrive Alexandria 19th.
(ii) It is not considered likely that books are compromised.
(iii) Capt. S.1 is requested to signal casualty lists to authorities concerned. (C. in C. Med., 1636B/22).

TRUSTY, TRUANT. It is necessary to send two good submarines to Singapore as quickly as possible to provide a British nucleus. Request you will sail TRUSTY and TRUANT as early as possible. This reduction in your force is regretted but we have no others we can send at once. (V.C.N.S., 1729A/22 to C. in C. Med., C. in C. E.F.)

Movements. Summary 225 Part A.
ERICA and 3 ships due Alexandria 1000/23 from Port Said. SNAPDRAGON with one ship towing Z Lighter due Alexandria p.m./23 from Port Said. Hospital ship RAMB IV due Port Said 0700/23 from Tobruk. Russian Tanker SAKHALIN leaving Dardanelles 23rd via Turkish Territorial waters for Famagusta.

/FAREHAM ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - contd.

Movements (contd.)

FAREHAM probably on passage Beirut to Alexandria.
PRIMULA and FALK with one ship left Alexandria 1600/22 due Port Said 1000/23 and Beirut 0600/24.
GRIFFIN NIZAM KIMBERLEY SIKH operating during night 22nd/23rd in area South of 32° N. between 029° 50' and 030° 30' E. then to Alexandria.
Part B. FARNDALE ERIDGE and PRINCE BAUDOUIN due Alexandria 1400/23 from Tobruk passing Y at 0445/23rd.
HASTY HOTSPUR HEYTHROP SALVIA and A.T.5 due Tobruk 1300/23 through R at 0700.
MOY APHIS SKUD 5 leaving Tobruk p.m./23rd for Derna. PROTEA, Oiler ZAHRA, Fleet Tug ST. ISSEY with lighter left Alexandria p.m./22 for Mersa Matruh and Tobruk through A, 0630/23, and H. 1700/23. M.T.B.215 anchored off Kenayis. N.O.I.C. Tobruk pass to Derna. N.O.I.C. Haifa pass to H.Q. R.A.F. Levant. (C. in C. Med., 1732B/22).

Jibuti, Vichy S/M, ELORN (Oiler), action with NETRAVATI.

Daily Int. Summ. 598 for 24 hours ending 1500 22/12. At 0500 hours message received from R/C aircraft that the submarine was not in Jibuti harbour. At 0505 aircraft signalled that ELORN was sighted at sea. Photographs confirm. Aircraft was ordered to search for submarine. At 0620 Navy informed operations room ELORN was in action with sloop NETRAVATI. On request from Navy one aircraft was despatched at 0625 to attack ELORN if found in action with NETRAVATI and O.C. detached flight Aisha was ordered by W/T to put up a fighter umbrella over NETRAVATI A.A. protection against Potez aircraft known to be at Jibuti. At 0700 hours Navy informed operations room action had been broken off with nil result and ELORN had returned to harbour. Blenheim aircraft was then ordered to restrict activities to R/C until further instructions and Aisha aircraft were recalled. At 0820 Blenheim aircraft signalled ELORN had berthed and submarine was not present. At 1415, a third R/C aircraft reported submarine present in Jibuti harbour. (C.H.Q. Aden, 1832/22).

Malta Air Report.

21st. 1506 hours 1 raider, bombs sea, no interception.
Night 21/22. 1840 to 0430 hours. 4 alerts, 8 raiders. Bombs sea land. No damage. Mines laid South Malta. No fighters up, unserviceable, rain. A/A fired. (H.Q. R.A.F., Malta, 1835/22).
22nd. 4 alerts 0645 hours 15 fighters, 0829 hours 4 R/C aircraft, 1120 hours 1 R/C aircraft, 1229 hours 23 fighters including M.E.109s Hurricanes up no interceptions, all at great height.
11 Blenheims out to attack shipping en route or transport Buerat-Tripoli Road, remaining Blenheims bogged, unable get off. (H.Q. R.A.F., Malta, 1845/22).

/UNBEATEN, ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - contd.

UNBEATEN, P 31 patrol reports.

(3) At 2304/16 in 039° 17' 018° 00' 2 waves of destroyers forced UNBEATEN down momentarily, heavier ships heard but not seen.
(4) At 0800/19 in 039° 11' 017° 42' sighted one cruiser hull down.
(5) At 1639/19 in 039° 10' 017° 41' sighted 3 Northbound cruisers passed to westward near P.31.
(6) P.31 reports sighting small convoy of small ships Northbound past Colonne on 18/12.
(7) (?At) 1316/19 enemy cruiser 037° 17' 019° 09' hunted by small destroyer using form of directional beam and hydrophone. Hunt continued until 1613, 34 charges dropped quite close.
(8) At 1658 fired (corrupt group) salvoes A at 3 cruisers Northbound range 1000 proximity angle 150, missed counter attack with 24.
(Capt.(S) 10, 1911B/22).

AURORA, German mine.

Pieces of mine found on board AURORA after being mined off Tripoli (Africa) have been identified as belonging to German 6 horned antennae mine.
(V.A.Malta, 1920B/22, to C. in C. Med.)

Situation report 177.

Central Mediterranean.
As reported by V.A.Malta, C.S.15's Force was heavily attacked by T/B dive bombing and high level aircraft throughout 17th and while returning to Alexandria on 18th. No damage to any ship.
Alexandria.
Attack on Harbour by human torpedoes night 18/19th See my 2151/19.
(2) Further evidence indicates that U Boat attacked by JERVIS and reported in my 1833/19 was sunk.
(3) Four Destroyers carrying out A/S search to-night 22/23rd in area close N.E. of Alexandria.
(4) Western Desert. N.O.i/c established at Derna and clearance party moving forward. Port damaged but usable. Salvage in progress of Tug JEDDAH and Lighter A 11. Greek patrol off Bardia withdrawn.
(5) Submarines. 6,000 ton merchant ship torpedoed by PORPOISE at 1425/9 and beached off Methoni later torpedoed again by TORBAY when salvage was in progress.
(6) UTMOST scored one hit on target of two large Northbound merchant ships escorted by GARIBALDI Cruiser and Destroyers in position 39° 47' N. 17° 22' E. at 0131/13. Heavy explosion followed.
(7) My 1109/15. Both ships attacked by UPRIGHT at 0210/13 considered sunk and were approx. 7,000 tons. Speed 14 knots.
(8) TRUANT torpedoed large tanker entering Suda Bay 11/12 believed sunk. No details.
(C. in C. Med., 2004B/22, to Admty.)

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Troops for Malaya. Your 21412/G cipher of 19/12. (N.T. in W.D.) Despatch squadron first available opportunity. Malaya to note India's suggestion that this squadron be attached 3rd Cavalry. (W.O., 0600/22, to C. in C. India.) Ref. W.O. telegram:- 59407 (M.O.1.) 20/12 and 59557 (M.O.10) 21/12. Presumably Chiefs of Staff will decide which alternative they wish to adopt and you will issue necessary instructions. Meanwhile we will take all preliminary steps to arrange transhipment 53 Infantry Brigade Group under alternative B. (C. in C. India, 2045/22, to W.O.)

B M 9 B. Departure GIORGIOS AVEROFF escorting B M 9 B. (S.O.(I) Bombay 0816Z/22.)

DULVERTON. Sailed 1548Z/22. S. of A. 15 knots E.T.A. Kilindini 1700Z/27. Routed in accordance with C. in C. East Indies' 1110Z/18/4. (II) Intend programme date given in my 1810Z/19 should be advanced by 24 hours. N.O.I.C. Kilindini pass to SOUTHWOLD. (N.O.I.C.Durban 1645Z/22 to C. in C's Med., E.I., N.O.I.C. Kilindini).

CENTURION. Revised camouflage design for disguising CENTURION as KING GEORGE V, being flown to you in cover reference DUSTER, shows dummy structures additional to those used in her previous disguise and also a new scheme of painting. It is sent as an alternative to MALAYA disguise for use as may be decided. Request design may be delivered to ship. (D.T.S.D. 1907A/22, to C. in C. E.I.)

MOUNT VERNON. W.O. 59407 cipher M.O.I. of 20/12, para. 3 (a). Request you will divert MOUNT VERNON into Mombasa. (D.O.D.(F) 2006A/22 to C. in C. E.I.)

Saudi-Arabian Alliance. A.M.1122/13. There appears to be little Naval significance in such an alliance so far as it would affect the E.I.Station. (C. in C. E.I. 2056Z/22.)

China.

Hong Kong. I have not heard Stonecutters W/T since 2305Z/21. (Singapore W/T, 0114/22, to Admiralty (via Flowerdown).
Pass following to S. of S. Colonies (begins)

/Chapelries ....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Troops for Malaya.

Your 21412/G cipher of 19/12. (N.T. in W.D.)
Despatch squadron first available opportunity.
Malaya to note India's suggestion that this squadron be attached 3rd Cavalry.
(W.O., 0600/22, to C. in C. India.)
Ref. W.O. telegram:- 59407 (M.O.1.) 20/12 and 59557 (M.O.10) 21/12. Presumably Chiefs of Staff will decide which alternative they wish to adopt and you will issue necessary instructions. Meanwhile we will take all preliminary steps to arrange transhipment 53 Infantry Brigade Group under alternative B. (C. in C. India, 2045/22, to W.O.)

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Revised camouflage design for disguising CENTURION as KING GEORGE V, being flown to you in cover reference DUSTER, shows dummy structures additional to those used in her previous disguise and also a new scheme of painting. It is sent as an alternative to MALAYA disguise for use as may be decided. Request design may be delivered to ship.
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MOUNT VERNON.

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Saudi-Arabian Alliance.

A.M.1122/13. There appears to be little Naval significance in such an alliance so far as it would affect the E.I.Station. (C. in C. E.I. 2056Z/22.)

China.

Hong Kong.

I have not heard Stonecutters W/T since 2305Z/21.
(Singapore W/T, 0114/22, to Admiralty (via Flowerdown).
Pass following to S. of S. Colonies (begins)

/Chapelries ....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

Monday.
22.12.1941.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Hong Kong (contd.)

Chapelries London. 1485/21. Following communique issued 0830 (begins.) There has been no substantial change since yesterday afternoon. Both sides are fighting with great stubbornness and the enemy is attempting to reinforce his invested associates on the South side of the Island. We have maintained our lines with difficulty. Governor (ends).
(N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0731Z/22, to Admty.)
Please pass to Ottawa. (Begins). For Minister of National Defence. 001/22. Your cable received, situation critical, Canadian troops part prisoners, residue engaged, casualties heavy. Lawson missing believed killed, Hennessey killed, Linden missing. Troops have done magnificent work spirit excellent. Sutcliffe. (Ends.) (Cdre. Hong Kong, 0827Z/22 to Admty.)
Joint Order 309 G.O.C. and Comdre. Applied section 90A Naval Discipline Act and section 184A Army act 24/12 in accordance with A.F.Order 3173/40. Inform War Office. Agreed.
(N.O.i/c Hong Kong, 0925Z/24 to Admty.)
Pass following to S. of S. for Colonies. (Begins.) Following communique issued 1430 (begins). Position substantially unchanged. Enemy continues to press his attack on land and from the air but our troops are defending their positions with utmost vigour, strength and determination. Whenever opportunity offers or can be made our troops deliver counter attacks to gain local successes and are inflicting heavy casualties on enemy.
Gratitude of people and fighting services for H.M. message. Governor. (Ends).
N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0927Z/22 to Admty.)
Summary 5. CICALA dive bombed and sunk yesterday. Practically all naval personnel now ashore and fighting alongside military. Dockyard heavily shelled and bombed yesterday, several fires started but got under control. (N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0935Z/22, to Admty.)
From Fervour begins.
Sitrep up to 1800 local time 22/12. Enemy landed fresh troops on N.E. Coast of Island and has been attacking continuously with land forces, mortars, gunfire and dive-bombing. Yesterday and today counter attacks failed. Our troops are very tired and have suffered heavy casualties.
Island now split in 3 parts. Isolated British Force in Stanley, Japanese on eastern half of Gap just west of Repulse Bay W/T Station still infiltrating, and ourselves still in possession of Wireless apparatus though very weakly held adjacent to tip. Small pockets of British remnants still holding out in isolated positions. Water and transport situation critical. Still unable to replenish ammunition supply as required. Hong Kong surrounded though still holding out. Much material damage. Have successfully destroyed oil installations at Texa Co Asiatic Petroleum Co. (?Dump) Ma Tau Kok but cannot destroy at Lai Chi Kok on account of proximity of large civil hospital.
(Cdre. Hong Kong 1105Z/22, to Admty, (pass to Troopers in C. in C. E.F.)

/Eastern ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - contd.

Eastern Fleet.

Following ships are to be regarded as forming part of Eastern Fleet. REVENGE ROYAL SOVEREIGN DANAE DURBAN DRAGON JUPITER VAMPIRE ENCOUNTER ELECTRA and EXPRESS. (C. in C. E.F., 0525Z/22).

S/M's O.16 lost, K.13 damaged.

Neth. S/M O.16 lost probably in E (?Johore) mine field. One survivor who will be interrogated when able to. (11) A battery explosion took place in Neth. S/M K.13 at 0630Z/21 in Naval Base. 2 killed, 4 injured. (111) C.Z.M. has been informed. (C. in C. E.F., 0311Z/22 to Admty.)

TEVIOT BANK.

I shall shortly have completed local mining operations and may be able to make TEVIOT BANK available elsewhere. Have you any useful employment for her?
(C. in C. E.F., 0313Z/22, to C. in C. E.I., A.C.N.B., (R) Admty.)

Manila.

Ships in port 21/12 (list). Sailings reported F.O. by Consul-General in view of possibility that my code compromised. (N.C.S.O., Manila, 0350Z/22, to Admty.)

Malaya.

Military Situation Report. (Adv. H.Q., M.C., 0512/22 to W.O., etc.) [illegible]

Superior Japanese Aircraft.

Daily Op. Summ. up to 1030 22/12. Combats confirm Navy 'O' fighters faster and more manoeuvrable than Buffaloes. My OPREP 4 refers. Also underlines vital necessity for speedy Hurricane reinforcement now at sea. (A.H.Q., F.E., 1530/22).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

U.S. Merchant Ships, C.B.'s. — Admty. 1933A/15 passed to A.I.G. 130 with T.O.O. 1714Q/18. "U.S.A. Merchant Ship" is to include merchant ship flying U.S. flag only. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1052Q/22 to A.I.G. 130).

CASTLE HARBOUR. — Your 1257A/20. CASTLE HARBOUR is one of the only two A/S fitted vessels based at Bermuda. Consider it an unjustifiable risk to release her until a suitable relief has arrived. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1201Q/22 to Admty.)

MATHILDA. — Ottawa 1527Z/18 (MATHILDA drifting ashore 10 miles N.W. of Nuevitas). Ship signalled brought to anchor and ordered tug, 21/12, no information at Havana of arrival at Cuban port. (S.O.I. Jamaica 1231R/22 to N.S.H.Q. etc.) My 1231R/22. KILLERIG proceeding to assist. (S.O.I. Jamaica, 1803R/22 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, C. in C. A.W.I., Admty.)

PASTEUR. — T.C. 16. Opnav 1820/19 and 0215/21. Request report if PASTEUR in company when convoy met at M.O.M.P. or any recent information on her position. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1332Z/22 to C. in C. W.A.) Com Task for 19 reports T.C. 16 less PASTEUR now in company British escort time 1110Z/22. (Opnav, 1625/22 to C.O.A.C. and Admty.)

DINARIC. — Your 1312A/26/11 DINARIC has not arrived. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1414Z/22 to Admty.)

S.C.61. — My 1424Z/20. Ref. ST. CLAIR, defective, unable to sail. NIAGARA will sail to overtake convoy during daylight on 28/12 and this be with convoy over more dangerous part of route. DIANTHUS S.O. until NIAGARA joins. (C.C.N.F. 1503Z/22 to Admty. etc.)

S.C. 62. — Task Unit 4.1.17 ASSINIBOINE, S.O. of Escort, MIMOSA, KENOGAMI, SOREL, ALYSSE, ACONITE. (C.C.N.F., 1616Z/22 to Admty. etc.)

BITTERSWEET. — Being sailed p.m./22 to arrive Halifax 24/12 to discharge ratings to leave. Request ship be subsequently sailed so as to arrive Charleston Sea Buoy 2C at 2000 zone 5 on 31/12. (C.C.N.F., 1619Z/22 to C.O.A.C. Halifax).

/T.C.17.....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 22.12.1941. Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies-Contd.

T.C.17. Movement control reports total 7,800 will be ready for embarkation mid-Jan. Request early advice ships allocated and indicated sailing date for Halifax. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1633Z/22 to D. of S.T.)

Bona Intelligence. Bone (? Bona) 17/12. Arrivals, 13/12, SAINT FRANCOIS from Algiers, CATHERINE SCHIAFFINO from Sete. Departures: 13/12, G.G. de GUEYDON for France, P.L.M. 21 for France. (B.A.D., 1711R/22 to Admty.)

QUEEN OF BERMUDA. My 1337/20. Would appreciate early details all accommodation available service passengers to U.K. in QUEEN OF BERMUDA. In lieu of passengers proceeding Norfolk (Virginia) to embark prior sailing via Bermuda 28th, could QUEEN OF BERMUDA after working up at Bermuda for about a week proceed Halifax to embark passengers? If additional accommodation above these requirements is available Air Force personnel can be embarked. Norfolk (Va.) pass to QUEEN OF BERMUDA. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1722Z/22 to B.A.R.M.)

U.S. Shipping. N.Z.N.B. 1725M/15. U.S. Flag vessels bound Port beyond New Zealand will be routed South of New Zealand when endurance permits. (B.A.D., 1801R/22 to Admty., N.Z.N.B.)

French Shipping. C. in C. A.F. reports 21/12 that S.S. MARECHAL JOFFRE has been taken over and sailed under armed guard for a 'safe Southern Port'. The ship had little cargo. S.S. SIKIANG is being unloaded at Mariveles. There is at present no question of moving her. (B.A.D. 1929R/22 to Admty.)

Transport of Air Trainees. N.Z.N.B. 1210M/18. Request early information as to U.S. Naval Authorities intentions in view of the importance of this movement and observing that it has previously been escorted throughout its passage. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1940A/22 to B.A.D. (R) N.Z.N.B.)

Convoy Routes. Proposals for routes for H.X, O.N. and S.C. Convoys and for reductions in signal traffic. (A.C.N.S. (T), 2057A/22 to B.A.D.) See Lion Copy.

/Production.....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies-Contd.

Production of Naval Fighters.

Personal for B.A.S.R. from 5th Sea Lord. Your 1951R/19. Wording of Cabinet decision was -
(a) The highest priority should be accorded to the production of the fighter aircraft necessary to equip and maintain the armoured aircraft carriers of the Royal Navy.
(b) That the above should be put into effect in a manner which would cause the least interference with the production of other important aircraft, particularly heavy bombers.
Surely the demand for 440 Naval Fighters is large enough and sufficiently freed from restrictions for vigorous measures to be taken to fulfil it. If you can get 360 as an absolute minimum during 1942 we may be able to keep going. (5th Sea Lord 2145A/22 to B.A.D.)

Lights on M.V's.

Does C.N.C. agree that Navigation Lights should not be shown by any merchant ships in areas 8 or 10? If confirmed, request Admiralty will promulgate generally. (C. in C. A.W.I., 22120/22 to B.A.D.)

U.S.N. Dispositions.

Changes my 1655/16 to be sent weekly new locations 22/12 follow: BBS - ARKANSAS due Iceland 23/12. At Norfolk IDAHO MISSISSIPPI, NEW MEXICO ready about 3/1. CVS - WASP due Norfolk 24/12. RANGER due Bermuda 23/12. YORKTOWN now Pacific left Balboa 22/12 HORNET leaves for Key West Area 26/12. LONG ISLAND en route Argentia. CAS - QUINCY, VINCENNES en route San Juan. CLS - MEMPHIS at Miami. CINCINNATI due Recife 26/12. SAVANNAH at Bermuda. OMAHA left Recife 21/12 for Ascension. PHILADELPHIA at Casco departs 26/12 for Argentia. NASHVILLE due Iceland 23/12. Pacific. BBS - MARYLAND TENNESSEE PENNSYLVANIA left Pearl 20/12 for West Coast. CAS - LOUISVILLE at Pearl. PENSACOLA at Brisbane. CLS - DETROIT due San Francisco 25/12. PHOENIX due Honolulu 23/12. ST. LOUIS at Pearl. RICHMOND, TRENTON, left Balboa 22/12 for San Diego.
Asiatic. All heavy units Java Sea.
(Opnav, 2346/22 to Admty.)

Australia.

BRITISH SAILOR.

Your 1708A/15 Tanker BRITISH SAILOR overdue at Darwin since 17/12. (A.C.N.B., 1421Z/22 to Admty.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22.12.41.
Monday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

HELLEN. (torpedoed 21/12).

HELLEN torpedoed 080°. Cape Negro 4 miles while escorted by MAIDA 2352A/21st. (F.O.C.N.A., 0109A/22, to Admty.).
HELLEN Norwegian, 5289 tons, from Lisbon to Gibraltar. Position about 12 miles S.E.E. of Ceuta Morocco. (D.S., 839).
Norwegian S.S.HELLEN was torpedoed and sunk at 2310A/21 off Cape Nego when bound from Gibraltar to Isle of Sheppey.
(2) Ship was inside territorial waters and being escorted by ARCTIC RANGER. (S.O.I., Gib., 1246A/22 to N.A. Madrid (R) Admty. amended 0943A/23).
S.A.F.O. 770/20. My 0109A/22. Norwegian HELLEN. All C.Bs placed in weighted bag and dumped overboard in about 40 fathoms of water. No possibility of compromise. Register of C.Bs in drawer in Master's cabin. No casualties. Information from Master. (V.A.C.N.A., 1302A/22 to Admty.)

ANNAVORE. (H.G.76.)

Only casualty to Convoy in last night's attacks was ANNAVORE. Probable 3 Submarines, the last of which was beaten off by DEPTFORD without loss. All well depth charged. Have collision damage aft but am reasonably seaworthy. Weather. (STORK, 1053A/22 to C. in C. W.A.)
ANNAVORE, Norwegian, 3324 tons, from Huelva for Oban in H.G.76 with iron ore. (D.S.840).

Submarines Reported.

0900Z/19
0132Z/22.

Following reports of S/Ms received (a) from American Ships' Exchange. At 0900Z 19 in 008° 00' North 082° 00' East. Conning tower sighted (b) From American Clipper. At 0132Z 22 in 007° 56' N. 082° 21' E. S/M steering 280°. (C. in C.E.I. 0528Z/22 1226Z/22 to E.I.Station).
My 0528/22. After interviewing the pilot of Clipper there seems little doubt that submarine report is genuine. (C. in C. E.I. 1306Z/22 to E.I.Station) See 24/12.

Estimate approx. positions of U. Boats. (D.D.I.C. 1400A/22, 1403A/22).

1615.

Am over enemy submarine in 45.15 N., 19.08 W., enemy sighted on surface and observed to submerge. A/C Using Call-sign O7MW. 1615/22 to 15 Group).

1640.

My 1615. Am over 2 enemy S/Ms in position 1 - 330° 8 knots, 1 - 060° 8 knots. W.W. (A/C W. Sqdn. 1640/22 to 15 Group.)

/1940 ...

War Diary.

22.12.41.
Monday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported. - contd.

1940. Am over enemy sub. in 45.04 N., 18.59W., sighted on surface. (A/C using call sign O7MW. 1940/22 to 15 Group.)

2022. German S/M at 2022 G.M.T. code message on 5660 K/Cs bearing 348/2 sensed. (V.A.Malta 2024B/22 to C. in C. Med., C.O.I.S.Alexandria).

Submarines Attacked.

By U.S.S. HAMILTON, LUDLOW. Comtaskforce 19 reports U.S.S.HAMILTON made a definite sound contact at 1000 G.C.T. /21 in 59°-01' N., 34°-02' W. Made a depth charge attack but results are unknown, Lost contact. At 1120 in same general locality LUDLOW made sharp sound contact, made depth charge attack and lost contact. (Opnav. 0200Z/22, to Admty.)
HAMILTON and LUDLOW made good sound contacts at 1000 and 1120 G.C.T./21 in 59°-01' N. 34°-02' W. Our R.D.F. bearings p.m./21 and a.m./22 give fair indications of subs. North of 42° N. and West of 30° W. Positions as yet cannot be determined from these R.D.F. bearings X. (Opnav, 1545/22, to Admty.)

By A/C. Am over enemy S/M in 45.10 N., 19.40 W., sighted on surface and observed to submerge. Have attacked with depth charges and estimate no hits. (A/C Duty L. 1318/22 to 15 Group).

By WESTCOTT 20/12. Your 2230A/20. Report whether Hedgehog was used in last attack. (C. in C. W.A. 1817A/22 to WESTCOTT (R) Admty.)
Your 1812/22nd (1817A intended). My 2230/20 was incorrect. First, second, and fourth attack were combined with Hedgehog and depth charge. 3rd and 5th attack depth charges only. Unexplained explosion at 1845 occurred after fourth attack roughly 2 minutes after firing Hedgehog and 1 minute after explosions of depth charges. Last attack of 40 minutes later and no contact being obtainable inside 900 yards time to fire was obtained by stop watch. (WESTCOTT, 2230A/22 to C. in C. W.A., (R) Admty.) See also C. in C. W.A. 1801A/23).

By ARCTIC RANGER. 1. My 1246A/22 refers. (N.T. in W.D.)
2. At 0135/22 in position 143° Almina Point 9, ARCTIC RANGER attacked contact. Result doubtful. 4 (? underwater) explosions heard, one very loud. (F.O.C.N.A. 2350A/22 to Admty.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation "Archery"

TUNA sailed this morning escorted by STELLA PEGASI as far as 60° 52' N. 0° 22' W.

At 1620 GNEISENAU was seen berthed at the T.B. Station at Brest, emitting smoke and with bows pointing west. Orders were given to reinstitute the Biscay S/M patrol.

TETCOTT (new Hunt class destroyer) was in collision last night in the Minches with corvette HEARTSEASE who was badly holed and was towed to Greenock. TETCOTT is badly damaged above water.

British Air Operations.

Wilhelmshaven was attacked last night.

At 0900 today an aircraft reported a 12000 ton tanker in 45° 45' N. 11° 48' W. steering 205° at 12 knots, which increased speed on sighting the aircraft. The aircraft subsequently attacked with depth charges and A/S bombs, estimating one hit and reducing the vessel's speed, leaving an oil track, course altered to 160°. VANOC (escorting H.G.76) proceeded to intercept and aircraft were sent to patrol from Ferrol to 100 miles to the N.W. At 2010 a U-boat was sighted and VANOC was ordered to abandon the search at 0400 if not in contact, and rejoin H.G.76.

Mining.

Operations H.J. S.N.26 C.

WELSHMAN and MANXMAN laid mines last night off Brest.

SOUTHERN PRINCE and WELLS laid mines today off the Butt of Lewis.

/Mining ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining. - Contd.

Mining of Humber area.

Greek S.S. STYLIANOS CHANDRIS from Convoy F.S.79 was mined and sunk 2 miles S.W. of 62 D Buoy at 1945/22.
S.S. LEOPOLD II (Belgian) in F.S. 79 was mined and sunk at 0215A in 52° 53' 48" N., 2° 5' 20" E.
S.S. ROKOS VERGOTTIS (Greek) in Convoy F.S.79 was damaged early this morning off 55A buoy, presumably by a mine. She was taken in tow by GUILLEMOT but grounded later in approx. 52° 52' 48" N., 2° 12' 12" E.

There was some air activity over the Thames Estuary late this evening and minelaying is suspected.

North Atlantic.

Whilst concurring with F.O.C.N.A. that the recent sinkings by U-boats of British and Spanish ships in Spanish territorial waters (see 13/12) warrant the taking of reprisals against enemy merchant vessels in Spanish territorial waters T.L. do not yet consider this advisable since the enemy dispose of a much greater force of S/Ms than ourselves for such a purpose and would be likely to throw off all restraint in attacking the important Spanish ore trade with the U.K. if we begin attacking enemy ships in Spanish waters.

Operation "Pantaloon".

ATHENE left Gibraltar this evening with 2 destroyers, carrying Hurricanes for Takoradi.

South Atlantic.

BULOLO and ASTURIAS are to patrol to intercept French S.S. PERSEE (ex PIERRE L.D. expected to sail from Saigon via Cape or Cape Horn with rubber for Germany).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterrancan.

It was reported that S.S. COZALLA (ex-SERAFIN TOPIC) sailed from Algiers from an unknown destination at 1300 today.

Several mines have been accounted for off Valetta harbour during the last 3 days. Enemy aircraft have been operating at night at very low levels off Valetta harbour for the past two weeks. Malta was bombed this evening and possibly some mines were laid.

Air R/C yesterday and today showed considerable shipping traffic off the Tripolitania coast especially in the Misurata area. On the night 21/22 6 or 7 large ships were seen anchored off Jedabya and vessels described as barges off Carcura.

HASTY and HOTSPUR sank a German U-boat at 1130 today in 32° 15' N., 25° 19' E., and took 43 prisoners. These two destroyers were A/S striking force with a convoy of returning store ships from Tobruk which was later attacked by a second U-boat and SHUNTIEN with 850 prisoners of war was torpedoed and sunk at 1900/23 in 32° 6' N., 24° 46' E., and SALVIA (corvette) which was collecting survivors was last heard at 2200 today and is feared lost.

APHIS was unsuccessfully attacked by a torpedo bomber this morning in 32° 40' N., 23° 41' E.

S.S. MEMAS reported that she was attacked by enemy aircraft at 1215B and 1247B today in 32° 20' N., 34° 0' E. No details are known.

East Indies.

There was an air raid on Rangoon this forenoon by 60 bombers escorted by fighters. Some 10 of the enemy were shot down. The attack seems to have been directed at the civilian population; damage in the harbour was apparently light. Rangoon is to be developed as a base for a force which may ultimately reach 4 divisions and 15 squadrons.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Far East.

Information has been received that attempts are likely to be made to order Norwegian vessels in the Pacific by means of W/T messages purporting to come from owners, to proceed to Japanese ports.

The Chiefs of Staff are to make recommendations to H.M.G. within the next few days, as to the extent to which reinforcements, both land and air, will have to be sent from the Middle East, first to stabilise and then to restore the position in the Far East.

China.

Hongkong. At 0830 a communique was issued in Hongkong that fighting continued all along the lines held yesterday, with a local success for us in the south. There is a shortage of water. The enemy have been seen stripping uniforms from wounded British soldiers and have caused confusion by wearing discarded gas proof capes.

Borneo. Sighting reports received today from British and Dutch aircraft indicate that attack on Kuching is imminent by a force comprising at least 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, and 10 transports. The destruction of Kuching aerodrome has been carried out and air R/C and striking forces have been detailed to locate and attack the convoy at first light tomorrow. It is reported that Dutch S/M K.14 sank 3 large Japanese transports and an oil tanker off Tanjong Po (N.E. of Kuching) today.

N.E.I. 2 Japanese convoys, each consisting of about 3 transports with 2 cruisers or destroyers were sighted. Landing is expected at Menado (Celebes) and Ternate (N.W. New Guinea).

Australia and New Zealand.

Australian troops arrived at Noumea today in transport ORMISTON escorted by LE TRIOMPHANT, to reinforce the local garrison.

/A...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Australia & New Zealand. - Contd.

A report timed 0513 today stated that Johnston Island was being shelled by a submarine.

U-Boat Campaign.

The tanker MONTEBELLO was sunk by torpedo early this morning in approx. 35° 10' N., 121° W. Shortly before this the tanker LARRY DOHENEY was unsuccessfully attacked by torpedoes and gunfire.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

A/S Trawlers for Faroes.

N.O.I.C. Faroes 2011A/19. There is acute shortage of A/S trawlers in all commands. LEICESTER CITY will be sailed to Faroes on return from boiler cleaning.
ii. S.O. Northern Patrol trawlers is to lend one N.P. trawler to Faroes temporarily and report name of vessel detailed.
iii. Instructions for sailing RONALDSHAY are being signalled separately. (A.C.O.S. 1258A/23 to N.O.I.C. Faroes).

Patrol Boats at Brightlingsea.

Following from F.O.I.C. Harwich is submitted for favourable consideration. Begins:-
Reference withdrawal of all patrol boats from Brightlingsea it is urgently requested that four may be retained. Reasons. 1530A/22.
(C. in C. Nore 2018A/23 to Admty.)

Norwegian M.F.V's to be re-placed.

Your 1903N/21 regarding 5 Norwegian M.F.V's. Repeat last name. If facilities available the 5 vessels are to be reconditioned as opportunity occurs ready for future use. Request names of Icelandic vessels substituted.
(D.S.V.P. 2320A/23 to A.C.I.C.)

Co-operation with Russia.

Soviet Fishing Area.

Soviet Authorities have arranged following fishing area in which Soviet fishing trawlers may be met.
The area bounded North and South by parallels 072° 30' N. and 071° N. and between meridians 042° 30' E. and 049° 30' E.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 1642C/23).

Use of Murmansk for Convoys.

Following for Maclay from Llewillin. Your No. 19. We are much concerned at suggestion that it will be "a few weeks time" before Murmansk is ready for 6 or 7 ships. In my view the position is much more urgent and I hope all possible will be done to impress on Russians need for expediting development works, organisation of labour, and any necessary work on the railway.
2. Understand that there may be some difficulty about securing homeward cargoes and trust that these will also be made available with least possible delay.
3. Assume that you have persuaded Papanyin to clear up with Moscow any doubt about his power to divert vessels to Murmansk. Even if this has been done, Papanyin's discretion will evidently be fettered until he knows that Murmansk is ready and only Moscow can ensure this.
(D.N.I. 1727A/23 to S.B.N.O. Archangel).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 23.12.1941. Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

0.10.
0.21. Cannot comply with your 1557A/21. E.T.A. R/V 290° Bishop Rock 8 miles 2130A/23. If on 23rd proceeding on surface by day E.T.A. R/V 1200A. Unless otherwise ordered will proceed R/V unescorted on surface by day on 23rd. (0.10 0415A/23 to Capt. S.7).
Your are to escort 0.10 and 0.21 to Milford Haven arriving 0400A/24th. (Capt. S.7. 0427A/23 to CUTTY SARK).
Proceed to Milford Haven escorted by CUTTY SARK fuel and remain at 4 hours notice for patrolling. (Capt. S.7. 0442A/23 to 0.10, 0.21).
My 1721A/21 and 0427A/23. R/V and E.T.A. 2½ hours late. (Capt. S.7. 1042A/23 to CUTTY SARK)

VANQUISHER. Your 0104A/23. Position 047° 47' N. 016° W., 20 knots. (VANQUISHER 0800A/23 to Adty.)

0.9. My 1652A/22. Add new para. (L) 0.9 escorted by LA CAPRICIEUSE leave Rothesay 0930A/23 for Milford Haven. Due Milford Haven at 1930A/24. (F.O.S. 0834A/23 and 1413A/23).
My 0203A/23. Sailed 0.9. escorted by LA CAPRICIEUSE (Capt. S.7. 0920A/23).

LA MOQUEUSE. A.M. 2004A/22. Request you will sail LA MOQUEUSE for Liverpool on completion of duty with B.B. 15. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 0949A/23 to F.O.I.C. Milford Haven.)

CONQUEROR. Sailed CONQUEROR in accordance with CONQUEROR's 1400A/22.
(N.O.I.C. Campbeltown 1105A/23).

URSULA. After passing latitude 49° N. proceed direct to Falmouth to R/V as ordered by F.O.I.C. Falmouth on 25/12. (F.O.S. 1129A/23 to URSULA).
R/V 180° Lizard 5 miles daylight 25th. T.B.R. requested radius of 20' from R/V from daylight to noon 25th. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1514/23 to URSULA).

ADVENTURE. F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1605A/20. Main engines cannot be completed by 26th and it will not be possible to move out of basin until 29th. Intend to sail about 1000/29. (ADVENTURE 1134A/23 to R.A.M.)

MANXMAN. A.M. 1416/21. Para. 7. MANXMAN is to proceed to Liverpool where she will be taken in hand by Harland and Wolff on 29/12.
2. MANXMAN is to report E.T.A. in order that air protection may be arranged. (D.O.D. (H) 1253A/23 to MANXMAN).

/H.31.....

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HOME COMMANDS.

Movements-Contd.

H.31.
H.50.
H.28.
H.33.
OTWAY.
JUNON..

Intend sailing Z5 at 0630/24 and FLUELLEN and CHILTERN at 0545/24. To R/V with H.31, H.50, H.28, H.33, OTWAY and JUNON at 0900/24 in 180° Lizard 5 miles. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1404/23).
My 1428 amend to read 6 S/M's due 180 Lizard 5 at 0900/24 not 0900/23.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1628/23).

LORD GREY.
AIGLON.

My 1234A/17. LORD GREY, AIGLON returned Greenock reporting inability to proceed due to adverse weather. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 1644A/23).

CAPE PORTLAND.

Your 1258A/23. CAPE PORTLAND detailed for duty with N.O.I.C. Faroes. She is due to arrive Oaze Deep A.M. 25th.
(S.O. N.P. 1826A/23 to A.C.O.S.)

LA MOQUEUSE.
REINE DES FLOTS.

Admty 2004A/22 not to F.O.C.N.A.
(1) route for LA MOQUEUSE and REINE DES FLOTS:
(A) 051° 58' N. 006° 15'W. (B) 051° 43' 007° 29'
(C) 050° 50' 010° 00' (D) 050° 00' 015° 00'
(E) 048° 00' 020° 00' (F) 041° 00' 028° 00'
passing West of Azores to (G) 020° 00' 023° 00'.
(2) C. in C. S.A. is requested to issue onward route. (3) N.O.I.C. Milford Haven is requested (a) to arrange if necessary for REINE DES FLOTS to fuel at Fayal (B) to sail ships accordingly.
(C. in C. W.A. 2205A/23 to N.O.I.C. Milford Haven, C. in C. S.A.)

Operations.

Denmark Straits Patrol.

Cancel my 1543N/22. Return to Hvalfjord.
(C.S.1. 0015N/23 to BERWICK, ANEMONE, VERONICA).

Interception of Enemy Tanker.

One Motor Vessel Tanker bearing 205°, distant 12 miles. My position 45° 45' N. 11° 48' W.
(A/C ? K. Squadron 0900/23 to 19 Group H.Q.)
My 0900. Enemy has made a large increase of speed, at 0915. (A/C K. Sqdn. 0932/23 to 15 Group H.Q.)
Proceed forthwith to intercept enemy tanker sighted by aircraft at 0900/23 in 045° 45' N. 011° 48' W., course 205°, speed 12 knots and increased on being sighted. A/C are co-operating.
(C. in C. W.A. 1010A/23 to VANOC).
My 1010A/23. Any further instructions will be issued by C. in C. Plymouth. (C. in C. W.A. 1041A/23 to VANOC).
Your 1010A/23. P.C.S. 047° 37' N. 015° 55' W., 168°, 25 knots. Fuel remaining 240 tons. Weather report. (VANOC 1100A/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

/My.....

MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Interception of Enemy Tanker. - Contd.

My 1048. Bad oil leak. Course 160°, speed 8 knots, 45° 50' N. 12° 2' W. (A/C K. Sqdn. 1110/23)
My 0900. Have attacked enemy tanker with depth charges and estimate 1 hit.
(A/C ? K. Sqdn. No T.O.O. to 19 Group H.Q. Recd. 1111/23).
C. in C. W.A. 1010A/23. Enemy's course and speed 160°, 8 knots. (C. in C. Plymouth 1132/23 to VANOC).
My 1132. At 1110 reported position was 45° 50' N. 12° 02' W. Enemy probably damaged by depth charge attack by Sunderland. 2 Catalina shadowing, 6 Beauforts due to attack at 1400.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1204/23 to VANOC).
BB 1 merchant vessel tanker 45° 26' N. 11° 14' W., 135, 10. (A/C Duty S. 1210/23 to 19 Group).
My 1100A/23. Course 135° (VANOC 1230A/23 to C. in C. W.A.)
My 1204/23. Position enemy 45° 26' N. 11° 14' W., course 135°, 10 knots. (C. in C. Plymouth 1346/23 to VANOC).
My P.C.S. 040° 25' N. 014° 44' W. A, 122° 25 knots. (VANOC 1430A/23).
Position given in my 1346/23 was at 1210/23.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1524/23 to VANOC).
A/C reports position tanker at 1605/23 44° 32' N. 10° 48' W., course 102°, 8 knots.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1656/23 to VANOC).
3 Whitley A/C will be patrolling parallel lines 20 miles apart centre line from FERROL to 100 miles to N.W. from 2030 to 2200/23. They have been informed of your position. Enemy A/C active in vicinity. (C. in C. Plymouth 1730/23 to VANOC)
Enemy Tanker is about 12,000 tons.
(C. in C. Plymouth 2306/23 to VANOC).
U-boat reported by A/C in 43° 52' N. 9° W. at 2010 (C. in C. Plymouth to VANOC 2316/23).
Unless in contact abandon search at 0400 and rejoin H.G. 76. (C. in C. Plymouth 2354/23 to VANOC).

Operation Q.N.

My 0936A/20 and 1545A/21 4th M.T.B. Flotilla are to return to Felixstowe.
(C. in C. Nore 1012A/23).
Departure 4th M.T.B. Flotilla. E.T.A. Felixstowe 1300A. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth 1110A/23).

Operation "Archery"

Scapa departure TUNA escorted by STELLA PEGASI. (A.C.O.S. 1028A/23).
TUNA sailed Scapa passing east of Orkneys and Shetlands escorted by STELLA PEGASI to 060° 52' N. 000° 22' W., then unescorted diving by day to patrol area C.5. (A.C.O.S. 1032/23 to S/M's Area A.)
TUNA escorted by STELLA PEGASI are due 060° 52' N. 0° 22' W. at 0300/24 from southward. (F.O.C.O.S. 2125/23 to PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE).

/Operation.....

MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Operations-Contd.

Operation "Anklet".

Following received N.O.I.C. Lerwick begins ESKIMO, LAMERTON, PRINCE ALBERT, GREY RANGER sailed 0539A/23. Ends. (R.A.D. H.F. 1130A/23 to S.O. Force J.)
PRINCES JOSEPHINE CHARLOTTE and WHEATLEND sailed. (N.O.I.C. Lerwick 1351A/23 to S.O. Force J).
One extractor pump broken down, making ship operationally unfit. Repair beyond ship's staff. My P.C.S. 470° Muckle Flugga 6 miles, proceeding to East of Shetlands. Request instructions. (PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE 1930A/23 to A.C.O.S, Reptd. S.O. Force J.)
Your 1930A/23. Return Scapa if weather permits. (F.O.C.O.S. 2100A/23 to PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE).

Exercise "Victor II".

Admiralty 2335/13 January 1941 referred to Exercise "Victor".
An exercise "Victor II" on similar lines to the Exercise previously carried out will take place in February, 1942.
Exercise "Victor II" is now being planned by C. in C. H.F. and the same degree of co-operation between all Authorities concerned will be required as for the January exercise. (A.C.N.S. H. 1233A/23).

Biscay S/M Patrol.

Following S/M Patrol Positions numbered 20 to 31 both inclusive are established in Bay of Biscay. Details. (F.O.S. 1534A/23).
See Summaries Folder.
Bring H.32, H.43, H.34, to immediate notice for sea. (F.O.S. 2029A/23 to F.O.I.C. Falmouth).
Proceed forthwith to patrol in 46° 57' N. 6° 42' W. Object to attack and then report enemy Cruisers and Battlecruisers. (F.O.S. 2039A/23 to URSULA).
F.O.S. 1534A/23. Sail H.32, H.34, H.43, as soon as ready proceeding submerged by day to patrol in following numbered positions: H.32 position 20. H.34. position 23. H.43. position 29. object as in F.O.S. 0117A/16/12.
(F.O.S. 2054A/23 to F.O.I.C. Falmouth).
Request S/M's arriving at Falmouth 24/12 may be prepared for Patrol and brought to immediate notice for sea as soon as possible after arrival. (F.O.S. 2322A/23 to F.O.I.C. Falmouth).

East Coast Patrol.

Departure M.L.'s 149 and 151 on patrol. (N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1538A/23).

MOST SECRET.

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Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

S.B.R. — S.B.R. in Area 73 west of 009° W. and in Area 76 west of 8° 30' W. and in Area 556 south of 045° N. are cancelled from 1600A/23. (F.O.S. 1041A/23).

Tanker attacked. — See Operations.

Biscay Patrol. — (C. in C. Plymouth 1730/23 to VANOC).
See Operations.

Enemy Air Activity.

LUCELLUM (Bombed 19/12). — Propose retaining Rescue Tug CHERBOURGEOISE 3 here until condition of LUCELLUM is secure. (N.O.I.C. Holyhead, 1145A/23).

A/C over Faroes. — One unidentified A/C flew over Svino, Nolso and Syderto today between 1125 and 1145, height about 2000 feet. As there was no air patrol today A/C presumed enemy although no incident reported. (N.O.I.C. Faroes 1610A/23).

Mining.

LEOPOLD II (Belgian, 2902 Tons) sunk. — Dangerous wreck with 2 masts showing in position 205° ½ mile of 56 Buoy. Name of ship LEOPOLD II. Explosion felt at 0220. (corrupt group) picking up survivors. (WHADDON 0323A/23).
Arrival at 0702A M.L. 194 with 7 survivors from LEOPOLD II sunk by mine 1 mile N.W. of 56 buoy at 0215A. (N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 0731A/23).

ROKOS VERGOTTIS (Greek, 5637 Tons) damaged. — Am taking in tow Greek ship damaged by mine or torpedo position 55 A buoy. Ship making water slowly aft but otherwise all right. (GUILLEMOT 0444A/23).
My 0444 tow slow and difficult. Request tug may be sent. (GUILLEMOT 0513A/23).
My 0444. Damaged ship is ROKOS VERGOTTIS. No casualties. Am towing under difficulties and making no headway. SAPPHIRE and CALENDULA standing by. Request fighter protection in morning. My position 052° 45' N. 002° 10' E. (GUILLEMOT 0558A/23).
Departure tug SUPERMAN to assist ROKOS VERGOTTIS. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0625A/23).
Departure Tug DIVERSION to assist ROKOS VERGOTTIS. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0725A/23).

/Departure.....

MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

ROKOS VERGOTTIS (Greek 5637 Tons) damaged - Contd.

Departure Salvage Vessel NESSUS to assist ROKOS VERGOTTIS. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0845/A/23).
Proceed to overtake your convoy. (C. in C. Nore 0929A/23 to CALENDULA).
Chief Salvage Officer, Yarmouth, reports ROKOS VERGOTTIS ashore Smith's Knoll one mile E.S.E. from 55B buoy and abandoned. After decks awash. Tug ropes parted owing to heavy swell. Will attempt salvage as soon as weather moderates. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1800A/23). (C. in C. Nore 1908A/23).

Operation Q.O.

Proceed in accordance with M.S.9's 1410A/22. (C. in C. Nore 0725A/23 to M.S. 9, M.S. 13).
My 1410A/22. 3 Laps completed 9 mines reported. 32 mines exploded 3 sweeps lost. At least 4 Cables clear water swept to East and West of mines. Explosions show considerable number of gaps in line and variation depth. Intend returning harbour to replenish gear tonight if possible, otherwise after daylight tomorrow. (S.O. 9th M/F 1755A/23).
Weather permitting propose both flotillas sail 0900/24 position G 11 45 position E 12 40. 13th M/S Flotilla sweep north and south Laps as in M.S. 13's 1755A/23. 9th M.S. sweep 5 miles East and West Laps to northwards of original position B.S. 26. Both flotillas return through position G.17 45, (? N) 19 45 and enter harbour. (S.O. 9th M/S F. 2203A/23).
Your 2203/23. Approved. Do not sail till ordered. (C. in C. Nore 2327A/23 to M/S 9.)

Operation 26.C.

Sailed SOUTHERN PRINCE. (N.O.I.C. Port Z.A. 0836/23).
Arrived SOUTHERN PRINCE and WELLS. (N.O.I.C. Port Z.A. 2310/23).

WELSHMAN.

Nothing to report. E.T.A. Milford Haven 1240. (WELSHMAN 0908/23).
Request you will sail WELSHMAN as convenient for Port Z.A. (A.C.N.S. H. 1615A/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

Tees. Hartlepool.

Port of Tees and Hartlepool now open in accordance with my 1815/21/12. (N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 1145/23).

/NELLIE.....

MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.-Contd.

NELLIE (Mined 21/12).

NELLIE unable to reloat owing heavy leaks. Necessary lay out anchors to secure vessel whilst salvage operations in progress. Can you place YORKSHIREMAN at our disposal during salvage operation owing suitable draft. (Chief Salvage Officer, Hull, 1520/23 to F.O. Humber).
F.S. 78. NELLIE arrived Humber and beached after being mined. (N.C.S.O. Humber 1724A/23).

STYLIANOS CHANDRIS (Greek, 6059 Tons) sunk.

Struck Mine at 1945/22. 4. Master thinks near H.5. Buoy. Details. Ship bound Methil to Hull in F.S. 79 sank 2 miles 235° from 62 D Buoy at 2045/22. Total crew 30, including 2 gunners, landed Grimsby. Only minor casualties. (F.O. Humber 1545A/23) (C. in C. Nore 1908A/23).
My 1908A/23. Amend to read position of wreck of STYLIANOS CHANDRIS is 235° 2 miles from 62D Buoy. (C. in C. Nore 2042A/23).

Bristol Channel.

2 Type A Mines detonated today by Sweeper at 1315A/ and 1340A respectively. Details. (Capt. M/S Bristol Channel 1713A/23).

Humber.

One magnetic mine exploded today, at 1334 by Sweepers. Details. (F.O. Humber 1818A/23).

Enemy Intelligence.

Brest.

R/C of Brest at 1620/23.
D. GNEISENAU left dry dock since 21/12 and is now berthed T/B station within boom with bows pointing west. Vessel emitting smoke. Light coloured camouflage over bows and between starboard side and quay. Drydock No. 9 now unoccupied. Position of SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN unchanged and no apparent alteration their camouflage. Two possibly three S/Ms port Militaire as 20/12. In Rade position of Gueydon Unit not photod. Two M/V's 330/350 ft. departed Rade where 530 ft. tanker seen usual anchorage. 500 ft. armed M/V seen entering Goulet from west. (PRU St. Eval 2015/23).
My 2159A/22. Preliminary report of photographic R/C of Brest at 1615A/23 shows GNEISENAU alongside Torpedo Boat Station. SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN still in dock.
(D.D.I.C. 2037A/23).

Casualties and Defects.

HEARTSEASE.
TETCOTT.

Have been in collision with HEARTSEASE. Am towing HEARTSEASE to Clyde. My position 56° 56' N. 8° 52' W. (TETCOTT 0107A/23).
HEARTSEASE seriously holed in collision with

/TETCOTT.....

MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties and Defects.

HEARTSEASE.
TETCOTT.
- Contd.

TETCOTT. Proceed with all despatch to her assistance. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0143A/23 to CAROLINE MOLLER).
Proceed to escort HEARTSEASE. TETCOTT has HEARTSEASE in tow proceeding Clyde at 0130. CAROLINE MOLLER being sailed from Lough Foyle to take over towing. (C. in C. W.A. 0222A/23 to NORTHERN DAWN).
Sailed CAROLINE MOLLER.
(N.O.I.C. Londonderry 0545A/23).
Have made 8 attempts to tow HEARSEASE and am waiting for daylight. Damage to TETCOTT above water serious, below water apparently little. W/T Office wrecked. No casualties. (TETCOTT 0720A/23).
Proceed to escort HEARTSEASE. (C. in C. W.A. 1146A/23 to VERVAIN).
HEARTSEASE in tow. P.C.S. at noon, 056° 52' N. 006° 48' W., 215°, 3.5. (TETCOTT 1225A/23).
TETCOTT reports position at 2000A/ 220° Skerryvore 12.5 miles, speed 3 knots. VERVAIN in company. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2245A/23 to CAROLINE MOLLER).
Can you give me position for R/V at daylight tomorrow. (CAROLINE MOLLER 2200/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

TOKEN (Wooden Steam Drifter) aground.

TOKEN has gone aground on Skerry, Skerry Sound E. Entrances, South of blockship EMERALD WINGS. C.S.V.O. considers salvage impracticable. Request relief steam drifter may be allocated to Scapa drifter pool for S.C.E. (Special Construction). (R.A. Scapa 1731/23).

Shipping and Convoys.

Convoy.

Anchored with rear ships of Convoy near B.4. Visibility nil. (VANITY 1106A/23).

STAFFORDSHIRE.

My 1517/19.
(i) FORTH and STAFFORDSHIRE escorted by CURACOA and WHADDON are to be sailed for Clyde so as to pass May Island at 0200/28.
(ii) You are to take ships addressed and STAFFORDSHIRE under your orders and sail them accordingly, to pass Dunnet Head at 1500/28. C. in C. W.A. has been requested to provide onward escort from Dunnet Head. (C. in C. Rosyth 1121/23 to FORTH)

/Belfast.....

MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys-Contd.

Belfast Fleetwood Ferry.

Admiralty 2323A/24/10 and C. in C. W.A. 1130A/25/10. Arrangements have now been completed and the service will run between Belfast and Fleetwood, starting from Belfast on 29/12. Programme up to the end of March is as follows. (D.O.D. H. 1306A/23).

F.S. 78.
F.N. 86.

F.S. No. 78 and F.N. No. 86 proceeding. (LIDDESDALE 1404A/23).

F.S. 79.

Convoy F.S. No. 79 anchored in fog between B.6 and B.6A buoy. (LEEDS 1425/23).

BARANDA.

BARANDA arrived here today having lost as result of heavy weather all the 1920 gallons petrol loaded as deck cargo at Leith. This petrol was carried in 4 gallon tins. On her last voyage to Faroes she lost in similar manner 2196 out of the 2500 gallons carried.
It is considered this constitutes a very grave danger to the steamship beside creating a serious shortage of petrol for military purposes.
(N.O.I.C. Faroes 1605A/23).

U.R.3.

Your 1706/20. U.R. 3. sailing is to be postponed until ships from O.N.S. 49 can be included.
(D.T.D. 1605A/23 to N.C.S.O. Aultbea).

O.N. 48.

Convoy O.N. 48 not met. BATTLEFORD BUCTOUCHE and PICTOU in company. HEPATICA MOOSEJAW and 4 M/V's 40 miles ahead proceeding on route. My P.C.S. estimated 058° 00' N. 020° 55' W., 270°, 6.5. (ST. LAURENT 2000Z/23 to U.S. Chief of Naval Ops.)

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Sinkings in Spanish Waters.

Concur that sinkings referred to in para. (11) of your 1622/13 warrant the taking of reprisals.
2. Spanish Ore trade with U.K. is, however, of very great importance at present and if we begin attacking enemy ships in Spanish waters the enemy are likely to throw aside all restraint in attacking this trade.
3. Enemy can dispose a much greater force of S/Ms than we can for purpose of attacking shipping.
4. Therefore not yet considered advisable to attack enemy M/V in Spanish territorial waters.
5. Enemy infringements of Spanish Sovereignty and attacks on Spanish Shipping will be used as justification for any incident that may arise out of instructions in A.T.0119/28/11.
(A.C.N.S. (F) 0027A/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)

P.36.

My P.C. & S. 043° N. 011° 15' W. 175° 9.5 knots.
(P.36 0114A/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Your 0014A/23 acknowledged. Dive by day 25th and 26th adjust speed to pass through 037° 00' 010° 25' at 0730A/25. 2. R/V escort in position (Z) 0830A/27. 3. Bombing restrictions instituted assuming you will dive between 037° 00' 010° 25' and 036° 40' 010° 10' on 25th also between 036° 15' 008° 15' and 036° 10' 007° 35' on 26th. 4. A/S trawler on patrol inside 40 miles Cape Roca.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1336A/23, to P.36 (R) P.39).

WISHART, VIDETTE, BATORY.

E.T.A. Gate 0800/23 VIDETTE and BATORY in company. Request dockyard berth for WISHART and assistance for test of leakages in condenser.
(WISHART, 0350A/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Arrival WISHART, VIDETTE, BATORY.
(F.O.C.N.A., 0816A/23).

French Shipping.

Passings 22/12 eastward IMERETHIE II, SURVILLE, MAROC, all full. (V.A.C.N.A. 0925A/23 to Admty. for M.E.W.)

WESTCOTT.

Arrival. (F.O.C.N.A. 1028A/24).

French Ship.

Departure CAUDEBEC for Casablanca via Lisbon. (Porto 1029/23).

BADSWORTH.

C. in C. S.A. 1825Z/21. Amended route. From C. proceed to new D.D. 028° 06' N. 013° 35' W. thence to E, omit D. (F.O.C.N.A. 1018A/23 to BADSWORTH).

/Force H. ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. - contd.

Force H. destroyer screen. ATHENE.

If Force H has to proceed to sea in near future to deal with ships leaving Brest, following immediate action necessary. (a) Postpone sailing ATHENE. (b) Sail DINGLEDALE to westward. (2) Subject to 1(a), and using all destroyers of 19th D.F. and 13th D.F., following will be numbers available for Screen:- Now - 6; 25th - 7; 30th - 9. WHITEHALL excluded owing to poor endurance. BLANKNEY FORTUNE defects date of completion uncertain.
(3) 8 Swordfish should be available for ARGUS.
(4) Request very early reply. (F.O., H., 1118A/23, to Admty. (R) C. in C. Med., F.O.C.N.A., C. in C. H.F.)
Your 1118A/23. It is of greatest importance to Far Eastern air reinforcements that ATHENE should sail as soon as possible. In view of apparent U/Boat situation West of the Straits and unlikelihood that Brest Force is immediately ready to sail, this reduction to long range screen will have to be accepted. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1626A/23 to F.O. Force H).

MIRROR, cable operations.

Admiralty 2215A/22 (2125 intended). Consider it preferable to carry out operation in position proposed in A.M.1948A/18/11 where water is much shallower and easier to work on cable. Therefore intend to adhere to position given in A.M.1948A/18/1
(F.O.C.N.A., 1114A/23, to Admty.)

Route for S/M's.

UNA's 1705A/15. In view of frequent passages now being made by submarines from U.K. to Gibraltar, suggest that practice of ordering submarines to report on crossing 43° N. be discontinued as this almost certainly provides the enemy with knowledge of our submarines' movements and routes
(F.O.S., 1131A/23, to F.C.C.N.A.)

Enemy Tanker Attacked by A/C.

At 0900/23 aircraft reported a tanker in 45° 45' N. 11° 48' W. course 205° speed 12 knots, which increased on sighting aircraft. A/C subsequently attacked with D/C's, estimating 1 hit. Speed reduced to 8 knots, leaving oil track, course altered 160°. VANOC has been ordered to intercept.
(D.D.I.C. 1224A/23, to F.O.C.N.A.)

MARSDALE.

My 1550A/21 and 1328A/22 (situation report). Cancel reference to MARSDALE, sailing has been delayed.
F.O.C.N.A., 1247A/23, to A.I.G.65).

BADSWORTH, CAMPBELTOWN, BATORY.

A.M. 2027A/17. BADSWORTH and CAMPBELTOWN may be held to act as return escort for BATORY.
(D.O.D.(F), 1343A/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)

/MARON ...

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. - contd.

MARON. — Situation 2000A/23 (i) MARON 42.12 33.45 236°
(F.O.C.N.A., 1350A/23, to A.I.G.65).

S.S.DUERO. (Spanish). — Admty. 1921/4/9. S.S.DUERO was thoroughly examined at Gibraltar 21st. By Contraband Control and Security.
2. Since date of previous report Master and crew have changed. Attitude of ship is now friendly and nothing suspicious found.
3. Recommend removal from Admiralty Black List and M.E.W's G List. (F.O.C.N.A., 1608A/23 to Admty.)

LORD GREY, AIGLON. — My 1234A/17/12. LORD GREY and AIGLON returned to Greenock owing to adverse weather conditions (F.O.I.C.Greenock, 1648A/23 to N.C.S.O.Ponta Delgada for B.V.C. Horta.)

COZALLA. — My 20.10 22/12. U.S.Charge d'Affaires has just heard that COZALLA sailed from Algiers for unknown destination at 13.00 today. (Tangier 1735/23, to N.O.I.C. Gibraltar).

ATHENE. — Sailed ATHENE escorted by EXMOOR, CROOME routed in accordance with my 1740/20. S. of A. 14 knots. ATHENE has endurance for 4000. miles.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1918A/23, to Admty. etc.)

Fuelling of U Boats in Vigo. — Your 1246A 21st. I will take this up at once but would welcome being detailed.
(N.A.Madrid, 1930/23 to N.O.i/c Gibraltar).

South Atlantic.

QUEEN MARY. — Tanker SCOTTISH CHIEF should be retained for bunkering QUEEN MARY at Capetown. 2. Request report of likely requirements of fuel and water at Trinidad.
3. Destination in U.S.A. probably New York.
(D. of S.T. 0256A/23, to F.O.I.C., Simonstown).

Wreck. — Wreck dangerous to navigation in 004° 14' 30" N. 007° 12' 30" E. in 8 fathoms.
(S.O.I. Freetown, 1236Z/23 to Q.G.B. 80).

/W.S.12 Z. ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. - contd.

W.S.12 Z. My 1919/21. Weather is delaying sailing from Durban of W.S.12 Z. 9 ships are outside and remaining 6 will proceed as soon as weather moderates, probably A.M./24.
(N.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1427Z/23, to C. in C. E.I.)

GENERAL BIRDWOOD. M.S.Trawler sailed 1300/23 for Walvis Bay routed through (a) 005° 00' N. 003° 30' E. (b) 000° 00' 007° 50' E. (c) 006° 20' S. 010° 45' E. (d) 019° 00' 010° 45'. M.W.V.recognition signal to 11/1/1942 Coal required approx. (?624) tons, E.T.A. 3/1.
(N.O.I.C.Lagos, 1610Z/23 to N.O.I.C. Walvis Bay).

Movements. My 1031Z 10th amend as follows.
BULOLO's visit signal will be made by me.
(II) BULOLO on leaving Buenos Aires is to patrol southern half of J.33 and 34.
(III) ASTURIAS is to visit Rio De Janiero 8/1 then to patrol K.33 and 34.
Visit signal will be made by me.
(IV) Intend in BIRMINGHAM to visit Rio De Janiero 30/12 but further signal will be made concerning subsequent movements.
(V) Object of extension of patrols to eastwards is interception of French ships PERSEE referred in C. in C. S.A. 2141Z/13 addressed S.A.Station.
(R.A.S.A.D.1651Z/23 to BULOLO, ASTURIAS).

ENGADINE. A.M.1216A/19th. ENGADINE sailed from Freetown p.m./22 by direct route to Capetown E.T.A. 1/1.
6 Swordfish and 2 Hurricanes were badly damaged in heavy weather on passage out.
(C. in C. S.A., 1845Z/23 to Admty.)

Vichy Shipping. 1. Foreign Office have authorised S.O.E. to take action against enemy shipping and Vichy ships working for Vichy interests except those engaged in the trades approved by M.E.W.
2. The following conditions apply:-
(a) French West Africa - At present S.O.E. have a free hand but F.O. will review periodically.
(b) Spanish and Portuguese African Colonies:-
Consent of Head of Mission concerned in each case, or of responsible consular officer in colonial territories, is required for action, including suborning of masters or crews.
3. Local representative S.O.E. has been instructed to obtain concurrence of C. in C. S.A. in each case where maritime action is proposed.
4. Admty. have requested C. in C. S.A. to afford all assistance possible in projects involving seizure of certain axis ships in Fernando Po and Lobito.
5. Cover must ensure that collision with British authorities or forces will not be apparent.
6. Request you will give any assistance possible in Fernando Po project (W.O., 1935/23, to G.O.C. in C., W.Africa).

/BULOLO, ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. - contd.

BULOLO, Siamese Vessel. S.O.(I) Montevideo's 1924Z/22nd, 2119Z/22nd. Unsuccessful search during whole of daylight 23rd in maximum visibility indicates that Siamese vessel is not on direct route to Durban at a speed between 6½ and 11 knots. My P.C. and S. are at 2200 Z 027° 22' South 041° 38' West 104° 15½ knots. Weather report. (BULOLO, 2230Z/23 to R.A.S.A.D. etc

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Libya	Military situation reports. (C.in C. M.E. 0019/23 1810/23 2055/23 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.
LANCE	A.S. Malta's 1602/5, concur in proposal to dock vessel for examination in three months. time or earlier if rivets necessitate it, subject to ship being available. Careful survey should be made and report forwarded. (D.of D. Bath 0113A/23 to C.in C. Med.).
R.N. Air Section Aden.	T.Q. 736 23/12. Concur to proposal in your X 5029 18/12. (1530/18). (H.Q.R.A.F.M.E. 0846/23 to Air Min.).
Navigation Danger. Cap de Garde.	Following received from Lands End Radio. Intercept at 0941 G.M.T. DE FUX TTT Avurnav Bizerte NR 9233 spave de vapeur en deriva dangereuse pour la navigation a 8 miles 4 au 110 du feu du Cap de Garde (36° 56' N. 7° 47' E.) le 22 a 17 heures 2010/22/12 Comar Bizerte 0945/23. Lands End Radio. Telegrams T.O.R. 1020/23. (C.in C. Plymouth T.O.R. 1035/23 to Admty.). Translation by O.I.C: Wreck of ship drifting in a manner dangerous to shipping at 8.4 miles bearing 110° from the lighthouse of Cap de Garde on 22nd at 1700.
APHIS A/C attack.	Torpedo attack be one aircraft torpedo missed P.C. and S. 32° 40' N. 23° 41' E. 299° 5 knots. (APHIS 1035/23 to S.O. Force I Tobruk via WITHERINGTON).
KIMBERLEY KINGSTON.	Join Capt. (D) 7th D.F. at charted position of Shiek Mirbat I. Buoy at 1645 today Tuesday. (R.A.D. Med. 1036B/23 to KIMBERLEY, KINGSTON).
Precautions against Human Torpedoes.	Your 0930B/20th. Present stock of explosive charges would only last one week at increased rate. Intend maintain old rate and size of charges until further supplies arrive. Request these may be sent at first opportunity. (V.A. Malta 1155B/23 to C.in C. Med.).
Enemy M/V.	P.C. and S. of enemy M/V 37° 06' 11° 04' 110° 5 knots. (A/C B Sqdn. 1240/33 to Hal Far).
VARLAAM AVANESOV (Torpedoed 19/12).	My 1441B/21. (N.T. in W.D.) Lt. Cmdr. Rogers and all crew arrived Istanbul today except one injured man hospital Chanak. (2) AVANASOFF (Correct name should be

/VARLAAM....

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

VARLAAM AVANESOV (Torpedoed 19/12) -Contd.	VARLAAM AVANESOV - D.S. 840) hit engine room at 2151/19 by torpedo from submarine 3 cables from Turkish Coast 126°. Cape Baba 2½ miles. First torpedo missed and exploded on beach. Scuttling charge exploded with detonation torpedo and ship started settling at once, finally sinking at approx. 0200/20 in at least 30 fathoms. Crew landed 3 miles East Cape Baba and eventually reached Chanak 2400/21. (3) Nationality of submarine not identified but similar Italian BALILLA class. (4) Turkish soldiers Cape Baba stated S/M had been sighted in vicinity that afternoon. (5) Admty. pass to Adm. Miles. (A.N.A. Istanbul 1306B/23 to C.in C. Med.).
MEMAS A/C attack.	MEMAS reported herself attacked by enemy aircraft at 1215 B and 1247 B/23 in 032° 20' N. 034° 00' E. (N.O.I.C. Port Said 1420B/23 to HYACINTH). MEMAS attacked by aircraft (position) LOCH MELFORT proceeding to investigate at 1515C/23. Air protection sent but had to return through weather. (N.O.I.C. Haifa 1603C/23 to C.in C. Med.).
TRUSTY.	Return Harbour on completion of exercises. Acknowledge. (Capt. S.1 1431B/23 to TRUSTY).
TRUANT.	Small convoy expected from Westward A.M./24th. U/B's have been sighted near end of searched channel. You may enter harbour any time after 0800B. Give sweepers wide berth. (Capt. S.1 1605B/23 to TRUANT).
Enemy Units.	2 Destroyers 1 Merchant Vessel 3250 N 1630 E. 280° 10 knots. (Med. A/C A., 1615/23).
NEPTUNE	Following New Zealand Officers are missing believed killed when NEPTUNE was lost on 19/12/1941 (C.S.7 1715B/23 to N.Z.N.B.). List of ratings following. (V.A. Malta 2350B/23).
KANDAHAR.	Following ratings of Chatham and Portsmouth Port Divisions missing believed killed when KANDAHAR was lost on 20/12 1941. (C.S. 7. 1750B/23 to Admty).

/Enemy.....

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. -Contd.

Enemy destroyers. It is possible a small force enemy destroyers may be proceeding Tripoli passing Pantellaria at about 0100B/24 speed 22 knots. (2) Special Wellington, call sign R 8 V V, will endeavour locate after dark. (3) You will be kept informed.
(V.A. Malta 1825B/23 to S.O. Group 2, C.in C. Med. F.O.C.N.A. S.O. Force H.).

Malta raids. Night 22/23. 11 Ju. 88's 8 alerts, 1628, 1737, 1930, 2127, 2303, 0115, 0324, 0450 hours. Bombs land. No damage A.A. fired. 1 Ju 88 damaged. Hurricanes up. No interceptions, bad visibility.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1845/23).
Part 2. 23rd 0900 hours 20 fighters including M.E. 109's escorted 2 Ju. 88's attack Grand Harbour. 2 houses damaged. 1 Hurricane damaged 1 pilot slightly wounded.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1850/23).

Enemy mining Malta. Minelaying suspected in North West Channel. After passing through 0600A position ordered, pass through 36.13 N. 13.34 E. thence by Q.B.B. 197 para 2 (B) and para 4.
(N.O.I.C. Malta 1903B/23 to S.O. Gp 2).

SHUNTIEN torpedoed. SHUNTIEN hit by torpedo 32° 06' 24° 46'.
(SALVIA 1908/23 to Alexandria W/T.).

Destroyer Patrol. My 1143B/23 (N.T. in W.D.). Patrol is to be continued till 0800B/25. KIMBERLEY is to be detached to reach Alex Boom at 0900B/26. NIZAM is to leave Alexandria 0600B/24 to R/V with Capt. (D) 7th D.F. in 31.40 N. 30.10 E. at noon/24.
(F.O.(D) Med. 1913B/23 to Capt. D.7 NIZAM, KIMBERLEY).

SHUNTIEN Your 1908. Report situation and who is in company with you.
(C.inC. Med. 2128B/23 to SALVIA).
Destroyers have proceeded with RODI. SALVIA in company picking up survivors, intend join convoy shortly SALVIA following. SHUNTIEN sunk by submarine torpedo.
(HEYTHROP 2136B/23 to C.in C. Med.).

Enemy Mines Malta. 4 mines have been detonated on Oropeso Sweep off Valetta Harbours in over 50 fathoms.
(2) One moored Antennae mine on the surface in 40 fathoms, has 4 floats.
(3) Attempts will be made to recover this mine intact.
(4) Two Acoustic and 4 Magnetic mines have also

/been.....

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Enemy mines Malta -Contd.

(4). been detonated outside swept (100%) channels in 40 fathoms area has not been swept (100%) for (?6 miles).
(5) All these mines have been accounted for in last 3 days.
(6) Enemy aircraft have been operating at night at very low levels off Valetta Harbour for past two weeks. Is there any evidence to show that aircraft can lay German Type T mines or any other types moored mines without landing in water?
(N.O.I.C. Malta 2033B/23 to C.in C. Med.).

Enemy Units.

One M/V 3 small craft 180° 1 355° Misu Ata 5.
(A/C D. 2117/23 to Med. A/C Call sign R 7 M).
P.C. and S of enemy destroyer, 110 33° N. 14° E. 11, 090°. Am proceeding to investigate in direction 270°.
(R 8 V (Med A/C) Duty D. 2225/23 to R 7 M).
P.C. and S. of one enemy M/V and 4 enemy destroyers 1 D 33° N. 14° E? 7 - 270° - 8.
(A/C R 8 V D 2315/23 to R 7 M).
My 2315. One M/V 2 destroyers, A A A D.
(A/C R 8 V D 2322/23 to R 7 M).

Vichy Gold.

American reports 3 tons gold will be flown from Algiers to Marseilles tomorrow and further 8 tons 26/12.
(C.G. Tangier 2300/23 to S.O.(I)Gib. Admty.).

MOST SECRET

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

S.S. PROSPEROUS. — PROSPEROUS aground 9 miles west of Cutch Mandui Number one hold and number one leaking. Understand charterers have sent lighter and tug to lighter (? lighten) ship. Davidson.
(N.C.S.O. Bombay, 0714Z/23.)

W.S. 12X. — Request disposal instructions of ships of W.S. 12X due Bombay 27/12.
(S.S.T.O. India, 1020Z/23 to D. of S.T.)

B.M. 9. — Following transport of B.M. 9 sailed from Bombay 21st December for Singapore (carrying 8600 Indian troops).
(S.T.O. India, 1225Z/23.)

Equipment for Malaya. — Following transports sailed from Bombay 22/12
(S.S.T.O. Bombay, 1317Z/23.)

Equipment and stores. — Following 4 transports sailed from Bombay 22/12 for Singapore.
Request C. in C. Eastern Fleet will inform R.A. Malaya T.O.A. Singapore following transport sailed 22/12 for Colombo and Port T.
(S.S.T.O. Bombay, 1319Z/23 to R.A. Malaya.)

Rangoon Raid. — Rangoon had its first air raid this morning 10 o'clock. Details follow later.
(Govr. Burma, 1340/23 to S. of S.)

A/S Escorts, Durban area. — Your 1508Z/25/11.
1. Owing to shortage of ocean going A/S escorts it is not yet possible to provide more than the 5 Corvettes mentioned in A.T. 1824A/4/11.
2. If U-Boat attacks develop in this area dispersion must be adopted in the first instance.
(D.O.D.(F), 1627A/23 to C. in C. E.I.)

KUNG WO. — Your 2058Z/22 I have had to withdraw KUNG WO from Nancowry in order to repatriate labour to Singapore.
KUNG WO is a river steamer and not very suitable for operations in unsheltered waters without considerable building (in ?).
Intend to hold her pending A.C.N.B. and your reply to my 0313Z/22.
(C. in C. E.F., 1944Z/23 to C. in C. E.I.)

/Troops ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies - Contd.

Troops for Malaya.

Chiefs of Staff have decided that the second Brigade Group of 17 Indian Division will be diverted to Malaya, sailing from Bombay as soon after 1/1 as C. in C. E.F. can provide necessary escort.
(W.O., 1945/23 to C. in C. India.)

Port Defences.

Your 0240Z/15/12/41. 5 H.D.M.Ls will be shipped in January and 3 in February and will be off loaded at Durban. A.L. M.O.D. 5034/41 of 29/11/41 gives pendant numbers of boats constituting the 110th M.L. Flotilla allocated to your command.
(D.D.O.D.(C), 2004A/23 to C. in C. E.I.)

Troops for Malaya.

21608/G 23/12.
Ref. G.O.C. Malaya 27363 22/12.
S.D.1. This indicates that he considers the whole 18 Div. available for Malaya in addition to 53 Inf. Bde. Group which we have agreed to. In view of your 57756 (M.O.1) please state policy to be adopted.
(C. in C. India, 2116/23 to W.O.)

Air Raid on Rangoon.

Preliminary reports first air raid are not too bad.
Strength of enemy effort 60 bombers escorted by fighters. We seem to have bagged 10 Japanese. Our losses 3 machines one pilot safe. (? 20) still serviceable.
3. In Rangoon itself although harbour was attacked fact that Japanese seem to have used A.P. bombs point to conclusion that civilian population was a major objective. Unconfirmed estimates of casualties are about 1,000 including about 400 killed. Damage to harbour seems to have been light.
(Gov. Burma, 2300/23.)

Development of Rangoon.

No. 59902.
To provide for the land and air defence of Burma both for immediate defensive and for eventual offensive needs, you should proceed immediately with administrative arrangements for the development of Rangoon as a base for a force which may ultimately reach four divisions and fifteen squadrons.
(W.O., 2325/23 to C. in C. India.)

MOST SECRET

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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Hong Kong. Following communique issued 0830/22 (begins). Relatively quiet night and our positions have been maintained. Abortive attempts by small parties of the enemy to land on North side of Island during early part of the night were successfully beaten off. (Ends).
1400 (begins). Enemy continues to press his attack with great energy and has succeeded in bringing up some fresh troops. Our Forces are defending their positions resolutely with every means at their command.
(Govr. Hong Kong, No T.O.O./23 to S. of S. for Colonies.)
Following from Governor, Hong Kong, for S. of S. 1495 dated 23/12. (Begins).
General situation, Monday, Tuesday.
Enemy has slightly improved his position in last 24 hours but lines hold generally as yesterday. Troops very tired but spirit generally good, stating understood that every day's resistance is of value to Allied cause. Water position in city and on peak is most precarious, since principal reservoirs are in enemy hands and vital connections from remaining reservoirs have been extensively damaged by persistent enemy shell fire. Little more than one day's supply is at present moment available. Every effort is being made by P.W.D. to repair damage and by enemy to prevent repair. Food supplies are greatly reduced by enemy occupying many depots and by destruction through fires caused by enemy action. Civilian casualties in very round figures 4000 of whom 1000 killed but accuracy quite impossible since many report centres are in enemy hands. Enemy has practically unhindered observation of all our movements.
(N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0555Z/23 to Admty.)
Situation report up to 1700 local time 23rd. During past 24 hours enemy has kept up incessant attacks and local raids accompanied by intensive bombardments of troops and important points by dive-bombers mortars and artillery of all calibres. Communication very difficult to maintain. Some ground on Mount Cameron lost during the night was recaptured early this morning by party of Royal Marines. Position now materially unchanged.
Garrisoned Hotel was evacuated by Stanley Force last night as surrounded and untenable. Further counter attacks by Stanley Force towards Stanley Mound failed with some casualties. Enemy in possession of Indian military hospital at Tungwah east of Carolens (?Cliff) but behaving well towards wounded. Troops now very tired. Water and transport situation still very grave.
Chinese Secret Intelligence indicates possible backward movement of some Japanese transport and artillery. Fortress headquarters now being bombarded. (N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0837Z/23 to Admty., C. in C. E.F.)

/Batavia ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary. 23.12.1941. Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - Contd.

Batavia, Exam. Service.

Batavia Roads Chart 933.
(1)(a) An examination service has been established. Examination signals are shown from Edam Island Light House, on the Island of Leiden and from Batavia Light House 06° 06'18" S. 106° 48'4" E. (approx.)
Examination area instructions and prohibited areas.
(R.A. Malaya, 0237Z/23 to China Stn., etc.)

KAMPAR.

At Penang on 12/12 K(?AM)PAR C.O. Tempy. Lieut. Henry W. Richardson R.N.R. (T.124) (?) floating near miss and beached.
On (? 13) December machine-gunned and bombed set on fire magazine finally exploding. No European casualties.
(Cdre. Malaya, 1047Z/23.)

Malaya.

Situation Report, Military and Air.
(Adv. H.Q. Malaya, 0525/23 to W.O., etc.)
See Lion Copy.

PEREKOP sunk.

Soviet PEREKOP, 2493 tons, for Vladivostok from Surabaya in ballast, attacked by Japanese aircraft on 20/12 and is presumed to have sunk. 8 of crew killed, 32 saved.
(D.S., 840, 23/12.)

Danger areas.

Graspar Straits charts affected Nos. 2137, 2149, 3597 and 1263. The area dangerous to shipping: The parallels 02° 24' S. and 03° 10' S. and the meridians 106° 50' E. and 107° 40' E. Any vessels entering the above area do so at their own risk and peril.
(R.A. Malaya, 1117Z/23.)

Air Reports of Enemy Forces.

Daily Op. Sum. up to 1030Z/23/12.
R/C report from Singkawang received 0350Z hours covering Tanjong Datoek to Tanjong Sirik 12 plus unidentified ships and warships sighted 150 miles North Tanjong Sirik 0030 hours. 2 Catalinas despatched to shadow. Dutch flying boat R/C Sambas-Natuna no report. Hudson R/C East coast negative report. Hudson diverging search 300 miles N./N.E. negative poor visibility. Glenn Martin R/C East coast negative. Hudson R/C West coast negative.

/6 Glenn ...

MOST SECRET

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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Air Reports of Enemy Forces. (Contd.)

6 Glenn Martins ordered to attack force sighted 150 miles North Tanjong Sirik from Singkawang. Meanwhile Singkawang reported aerodrome unserviceable due heavy bombing raid but no aircraft destroyed, aerodrome repairs in progress. 0930Z hours report from Batavia 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 2 large ships 8 others in position 70 miles 354° from Kuching course 216° speed 6 knots. Catalina reported 1005Z hours 2 cruisers 1 destroyer 240 miles N. of Kuching course 190° 9 deg.(? knots).
(A.H.Q. Far East, 1230/23.)

U.S. Pacific Fleet.

A.T. 1636A/17. Following changes in disposition of U.S. Pacific Fleet.
Battleships: MARYLAND, TENNESSEE, PENNSYLVANIA left Pearl Harbour 20/12 for West Coast America.
Carriers: YORKTOWN entered Pacific and left Balboa 22/12.
8" Cruisers: LOUISVILLE at Pearl Harbour.
PENSACOLA at Brisbane.
6" Cruisers: DETROIT due San Francisco 25/12.
PHOENIX due Honolulu 23/12.
ST. LOUIS at Pearl Harbour.
RICHMOND, TRENTON left Balboa 23/12, for San Diego.
(D.O.D.(F), 1815A/23 to C. in C. E.F., N.Z.N.B., A.C.N.B., N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

Warning to Norwegian Ships.

Information received that attempts are likely to be made to order Norwegian vessels in the Pacific by means of W/T messages purporting to come from owners to proceed to Japanese ports. Masters are to be warned accordingly.
(A.C.N.S.(T), 2337A/23 to C. in C. E.F., A.C.N.B., N.Z.N.B., N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

America and West Indies.

Air Attacks on Hawaii.

Following report received by War Dept. re Japanese air tactics Hawaii. All targets attacked almost simultaneously, primary objectives Pearl Harbour and Hickam Field regarded as single objective. Wheeler and other fields secondary objectives. Dive-bombers attacked from all directions simultaneously initiating dive of 45 to 50° from 3000 to 5000 feet and

/continuing ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Air Attacks on Hawaii. (Contd.)

continuing almost on to targets. High altitude bombers flew in 'V' formation of 12 to 15 aircraft spaced at average width of 2 spans. Bombing height 8000 to 12,000 feet. Dive and high altitude bombing well synchronised. Dive-bombers had close fighter support but no report of support to high altitude bombers. Latter employed only against primary objectives. Dive-bombers after releasing bombs machine-gunned aircraft and personnel on ground. Impossible at present to estimate total number of aircraft employed but apparently at least 3 aircraft carriers used. Success of attack due to careful planning and preparation, complete knowledge objectives, surprise, and determination in execution. Fragmentation and demolition bombs dropped by dive-bombers, none larger than 500 lbs. High altitude bombers dropped converted 15-in shells, apparently for P.E.S.
(Rafdel, 0456/23 to Airwhit, (R) C.A.S., R.C.A.F. Ottawa.)

F.A.A. Officer for U.S. B. of A.

Repeat to Admty. and C.O.A.C.
On 15/12, Adm. Towers complained strongly at our failure to supply adequate liaison officers in the Bureau of Aeronautics. He particularly noted that no Fleet Air Arm Officer has ever been appointed to his Bureau and specifically requested that this should be done. Unless some action is taken Navy Bureau may begin to doubt our sincerity.
(Brit. Air Commission, Washington, 0603/23 to M.A.P.)

ROODE ZEE, towing operation.

Your 2308A/15. No difficulty anticipated. M. of W.T. New York informs me there is now some probability that other arrangements will be made for towage and that crane will not be ready to proceed till late February.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 09320/23 to Admty.)

BURWELL, RAMSEY.

My 1540/26/11. To where are BURWELL and RAMSEY to proceed on completion on 19/1.
(B.A.R.M., 1236R/24 to C.C.N.F.)

MIMOSA, SURCOUF, ALYSSE.

P.C. and S. 045° 30' N. 058° 23' W. 073° 8. Gale N.N.W. (damper ?) Peak from battery in SURCOUF caused by small fire but now extinguished and all in order.
(Adm. Muselier, 1300Z/23 to C.C.N.F.)

/S.S.CLUMBERHALL...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

S.S. CLUMBERHALL. PRUDENT proceeded to assist S.S. CLUMBERHALL 62 miles from St. Johns N.F. Out of fuel and towed her to St. Johns.
(F.O.N.F., 1339Z/24.)

S.S. PROTEUS. Your 1132Q/21 suggestion is made that enemy has made selective raids on Bauxite ships (1) to hamper aeroplane productions (2) to obtain much needed supplies of ore: note possibly Balkan insurrectionaries hamper mining of ore (3) to hide presence of raider by ignoring other ships.
Wireless silence of both ships supports this hypothesis: entails necessity for treachery in order to silence wireless and refuelling prizes from prepared supply in raider in order to try running them in.
A fireman, U.S. citizen, honourably discharged from NEREUS says Wireless Operator told of speaking PROTEUS early a.m./2 roughly 250 to 300 miles from Firisland, 54 hours after departure from Portland (Maine).
(R.N.O. St. Thomas, 1530/23 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

Japanese Carriers. Estimate of possible conversions of Japanese M/Vs into aircraft carriers.
(B.A.D., 1537R/23 to Admty., C.O.I.S. Singapore.)
See Lion Copy.)

Washington Report. Washops 13. (i) Wake. Further air raid by 17 heavy bombers on night of 20/21 Dec. Japanese forces landed on Island yesterday from several transports. 2 Japanese destroyers ran aground. (ii) U.S. Pacific Coast. S.S. STOREY reports being attacked by a torpedo which missed in a position 2 miles from Point Arguillo 60 miles N.W. of Santa Barbara, Cal. A U.S. Army aircraft sighted a submarine in 034° 18' N. 126° 33' W. S/M crashed dived immediately. A/C dropped 3 500-pound delay action bombs, the closest of which fell 100 feet ahead of submerging S/M. An oil slick appeared shortly afterwards. Both these incidents took place yesterday 22/12.
(J.S.M. Washington, 1549R/23 to Admty., etc.)

Routeing signals. In order to provide Navy Dept. Washington with detailed information of routes of all U.S. Flag or U.S. controlled merchant vessels sailing from African Ports to North, Central and South American Ports, S.Os.(I) Freetown and Capetown are to repeat relevant route signals to Chatfold Ottawa.

/2. N.S.H.Q. ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Routeing signals. (Contd.)

2. N.S.H.Q. Ottawa is requested to pass this information to Opnav Washington by mutually agreed means.
(D.T.D., 1555A/24.)

ALCANTARA.

Your 1344/22. If ALCANTARA is proceeding U.K. will any accommodation be available for personnel of services from Halifax late January.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1559Z/23 to B.A.R.M.)

NEREUS.

Greek NEREUS sailed Gibraltar 4/12 for Baltimore has not yet arrived. Gibraltar has no information.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1601Z/23 to Admty.)

PENSACOLA, EMPRESS OF CANADA.

Admty. 2020A/22 (Circulated as T.O.O. 1940/22.)
If U.S. Cruiser PENSACOLA could be relieved by British escort of duty escorting convoy 40 02. from Brisbane to Torres Strait she would be available for covering EMPRESS OF CANADA. As PENSACOLA's destination is Honolulu EMPRESS OF CANADA would have to continue unescorted for part of route. Arrangements are being made for onward escort from S. of Galapagos (Is.) and N.Z.N.B. is requested to propose a R/V.
(B.A.D., 1603R/23 to Admty., A.C.N.B., N.Z.N.B.)

ALCANTARA.

R.A.S.A.D., 1105Z/20 and B.A.R.M. 1344R/22.
Subject to concurrence of C. in C. S. A., on completion of refit about 20/1/1942 ALCANTARA is to be sailed to Bermuda to carry out one week's gunnery practices and then sailed to U.K. to give leave.
(D.O.D.(F), 1609A/23 to B.A.R.M.)
Concur. (C. in C. S.A., 1152Z/26.)

O.N. Convoys.

Recommendations made in your 1400/20 are approved.
(Opnav, 1633/23 to Admty.)

Patrols off Chile.

Re my letter dated 25/10 dealing with patrol of southern channels within Chilean Territorial waters.
Whatever decisions are arrived at regarding main naval forces off west coast of South America whether they be American, British or Chilean, consider highly desirable that patrol of channel should be done by ourselves under Canadian flag as indication now to Canadian war vessels being granted non-belligerent facilities onwards forthcoming Rio de Janeiro Conference.

/Vigorously ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Patrols off Chile. (Contd.)

Vigorously advocated because efficient patrol depends so much on S.I.S. organizations which we do not want to uncover. I much doubt if U.S. or Chilean Authorities have more than very superficial knowledge of probable enemy bases.
I have impression that Admiral Allard without backing of late President will not long retain post and sympathy of his successor may not be so favourable towards us which would reduce efficient Chilean Naval co-operation.
My 1830/9 shows that present disposition of Chilean (group missing ? naval) forces make no provision for adequate patrolling of channels.
I am not hopeful that Chilean Air Force will produce satisfactory result. At present they have no suitable machines and vigil of these channels by air R/C only would be very difficult.
(N.A. Santiago, 1740/23 to Admty.)

FIREDRAKE.

B.A.R.M.'s 1340R/22.
On completion of satisfactory trials FIREDRAKE should be sailed for Halifax. Ship will be required to leave Halifax for convoy escort duties about 22/1.
(D.O.D. H., 1823A/23 to B.A.R.M., C. in C. A.W.I.)

ARCHER.

Your 1032/21.
Destroyer escort for ARCHER can probably be made available in the vicinity of the Azores about 16th or 17/1 depending on sailing of a convoy from U.K.
2. Necessary that, provided Martlets have been embarked, ARCHER should be sailed in time to make this R/V which will be arranged by C. in C. W.A.
3. Request you will report anticipated S. of A. of ARCHER.
(D.O.D.(H), 1824A/23 to B.A.R.M.)

Japanese Vessel, Chile.

Report I classify as B.2 states that Japanese vessel likely to arrive at Chilean port within next 24 hours. Whether war vessel or otherwise informant does not know, like-wise port of call. If visit of clandestine nature consider Guaitecas most likely. Hope to obtain more details.
(N.A. Santiago de Chile, 1840/23 to Admty.)

Navigation, Delaware River.

C.S.A. Philadelphia reports "No navigation in lower Delaware River is permitted during hours of darkness by order of local Naval Authorities."
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1909Z/23 to Admty.)

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

H.X.166. Escort Commander reports contacted 12 ships. Convoy apparently badly scattered. Informed convoy not formed due to fog. Unable to locate or contact by radio Escort Commander or Commodore. Convoy has tomorrow noon position. Will carry out Opnav 1535/23 with ships in company and continue attempts to assemble convoy.
(Opnav, 2155/23 to Admty.)

U.S. Forces. A.T. 1636A/17. Following changes disposition U.S. Forces on A. and W.I. Station:
Battleships: ARKANSAS due Iceland 23/12; IDAHO, MISSISSIPPI, NEW MEXICO, at Norfolk ready about 3/1.
Aircraft Carriers: RANGER due Bermuda 23/12; YORKTOWN now Pacific left Balboa 22/12; HORNET leaves for Key West area 26/12; WASP due Norfolk 24/12.
8" Cruisers: QUINCY and VINCENNES en route to San Juan.
6" Cruisers: MEMPHIS at Miami; SAVANNAH at Bermuda; PHILADELPHIA at Casco departs 26/12 for Argentia; NASHVILLE due Iceland 23/12.
(D.O.D.(F), 2238A/23 to C. in C. H.F., C. in C. A.W.I., N.S.H.Q.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Enemy Intelligence. Gilbert Island. Japanese carried out air R/C of Gilbert Island on 17th, 19th and 22nd December. Aircraft reported as 4 engined high wing flying boats. Seaplanes also reported hospital ship using Makin British North Borneo as base. Reported further Japanese boom defences Tarawa. Grade B.2.
Nukufetau report submarine sighted Sarawak. Grade C.3. Pacific Fleet (U.S.) pass to Opnav.
(N.Z.N.B., 0436Z/23.)

Enemy A/C Namatanai, BRITISH SAILOR overdue, Noumea Garrison. My 1501Z/21. An enemy A/C believed type 97 Kawanisi flying boat flew over Namatanai (New Ireland) 20/12. British tanker ? BRITISH SAILOR 5 days overdue at Darwin from Tarakan.
Australian troops in transport ORMISTON escorted by Free French light cruiser LE TRIOMPHANT arrived Noumea 23/12 as reinforcement for local garrison.
(A.C.N.B., 1104Z/23 to Admty., etc.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

HELLEN (torpedoed 21/12). — Your 0715A/23. Originated by W.R. requesting date of sinking of Norwegian S.S.HELLEN reported in S.O.(I) Gibraltar's 1246A/22 as having taken place at 2310A/25. Time and date is 2310A/21. (S.O.I., Gibraltar, 0943A/23, to Admty.)

AVANASOFF, SHUNTIEN. — See Mediterranean.

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SAGADAHOC (torpedoed 3/12). — Admty. 1650/16. Master and 15 survivors of U.S. SAGADAHOC landed Durban from U.S.KENTUCKIAN. Ship was torpedoed by submarine at 1950/3/12 in 21.50 S. 07.50 W. Three torpedoes fired, all of which hit. No W/T message sent out. Submarine was of large type painted light grey, one gun before and one gun abaft conning tower, boats were hailed in English with German accent. Ship has U.S.A. colours on both side fully illuminated when hit. Second boat with Chief Officer and 19 others missing. (S.O.I., Cape Town 1001B/23 to Admty. etc.)

Submarines Reported.

2221/23. (Med.) — German S/M at 2221 G.M.T. 26. (?groups) code (corrupt group) 5660 bearing 352/2 sensed. (V.A.Malta, 0024B/23 to C. in C. Med., C.O.I.S.Alexandria).

H.G.76. — My P.C. and S. are 047° 16' N., 018° 47' W. 055° 7½. U-Boat may have been fooled last night by an half-hour staged battle of star shells, depth charges, etc. put on to E.N.E. an hour after convoy had in fact altered to N.W. (STORK, 1000A/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

1006A. — U-Boat known to be operating close East of Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 1006A/23 to S/M. 0.24).

1045A. — There may be 2 U-Boats in area bounded by 59° N. and 61° N. and 17° W. and 20° W. (D.D.I.C. 1045A/23 to Escorts of T.C.16).

1047A. — There may be a U/B in your vicinity. (D.D.I.C. 1047A/23 to Escorts of O.N.49).

Estimated approx. positions of U/Bs. (D.D.I.C., 1429A/23, 1430A/23).

1710A. — 1 U-Boat in position 294 Z (? J X X) (? 48° N., 18° W) 17. U-boat dived. (WITCH, 1710A/23, to C. in C. W.A.).

/1740 ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported. - contd.

1740. Am investigating suspicious object (possibly periscope) in 48.55 N., 14.18 W.
(A/C L, 1740/23, to 15 Group).

1745Z. By D/F at 1745Z/23 Position of German U/Boat was 46° N. 12° 30' W. reliable fix.
(D.D.I.C. 1912A/23 to S. and A., Plymouth Command).

2010. SPP One Submarine 43.52 N., 28.00 E., (? see next signal) course 070° 12 knots Hone Queen Light at 2010. (A/C T. 2155/23, to 19 Group).
U-Boat reported by aircraft in 043° 52' N. 009° W. at 2010. (C. in C. Plymouth 2316/23 to VANOC).

Submarines Attacked.

Swordfish attacks, use of D/C's. Your 1246A/21, para. (ii). Effect against U-boats on surface or just submerged is much more likely to be lethal with charges set to detonate at 25 feet than with those set to detonate at 50 feet. Considered advisable therefore to set all three charges on shore-based Swordfish aircraft to 25 feet detonation in accordance with Admty. 297R.
(D.N.A.D. 1741A/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)

By WESTCOTT, 20/12. Your 2230A/22. Hedgehog and depth charge attack are incompatible and should not be combined.
(C. in C. W.A. 1801A/23, to WESTCOTT).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

At 0925 aircraft reported the enemy tanker (see 23/12) in 43° 55' N. 7° 50' W., but VANOC reported at 1128A that there were two merchant ships of 4000 tons in this position, neither of which were tankers; the tanker was signalled by a Sunderland in territorial waters near Cape Ortegal, escorted by a German aircraft. At 1020 VANOC was attacked and missed, and another aircraft was homed on to her; she reported a split seam and a small leak in ship's bottom and that she must return for fuel. C. in C. Plymouth ordered her to proceed to Gibraltar at best speed.

Enemy coastal batteries fired 24 rounds at C.W.62 when off Dover late this evening. No casualties or damage are reported.

H.31 was ordered to leave patrol after dark 21/12 and R/V off the Lizard at 0900/24. H.31 had not arrived by 2201A/24.

British Air Operations.

Bomber Command aircraft last night attacked Brest, Ostend, Dunkirk and Calais Docks.

Enemy Air Operations.

It was reported by one of our aircraft that H.33, returning from Biscay patrol, was bombed at 1025.

MOST SECRET.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining.

6 Hampdens laid mines last night in the Elbe area.

Normal procedure was resumed at the ports of Tees and Hartlepool today.

Several mines were exploded today in the Humber area.

S.S. EASTWOOD in F.N.87 was mined at 1800 off Aldeburgh and was towed to Harwich. At 2200 S.S. STANMOUNT and MERCHANT also in F.N.87 were mined and abandoned.

North Atlantic.

The 12000 ton German tanker which was attacked yesterday by our aircraft (see Home Commands 23/12) was sighted by a Sunderland at 0848 today, about 10 miles east of Cape Ortegal. The Sunderland engaged the escorting JU.88 and at 0915 attacked the tanker with depth charges, A/S bombs and machine gunfire. The JU.88 attacked VANOC and the Sunderland remained as escort to VANOC, having several inconclusive engagements with the JU.88. At 1028 a Whitley sighted the tanker in Ortigueira harbour and this afternoon a Beaufort attacked and secured one torpedo hit on the tanker which when last seen appeared to be settling by the stern. About an hour later a Whitley again attacked the tanker, which now appeared to be beached about a mile from the shore, and scored very near misses with bombs. When last seen the tanker appeared to be aground with after well deck partly submerged amidst a mass of oil; the crew were abandoning ship.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

ROYAL SOVEREIGN, escorting Convoy W.S.12 left Durban at 0543 today.

Mediterranean.

Malta had 3 alerts today. In the first, at 0746 the Grand Harbour was attacked; transport AJAX received superficial damage and a merchant vessel was hit. There were no naval casualties.

11 ships are reported in Suda Bay. Troops may be embarking.

Our troops captured Benghazi at noon today. The town is reported to be devastated. During the day the enemy dropped 12 mines on Benghazi; one fell on the mole, the remainder outside the harbour.

At 1315/24, our artillery engaged a vessel 75 ft long at point 526371; direct hits were scored and the craft was beached and burnt out.

6 Naval aircraft from Malta laid mines late this evening outside Tripoli harbour with 1 Albacore bombing as a diversion.
An aircraft reports one hit on a submarine in 33° 32' N. 24° 58' E. at 1035 today.

Oiler PHENIX blew up in Haifa Harbour today and set fire to oiler VILJA; the fire in the latter was got under before the tanks were fired.
Most of the ships were got out of harbour where the oil was on fire. The main boom defence was damaged by fire and the port was closed until a.m./26.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT

East Indies.

C. in C. India reports that the present position at Goa is intolerable, as a number of German ships are lying in harbour and their crews are at large. He recommends that the German ships be cut out. C. in C. E.I. does not agree with the proposed operation and considers both naval and land forces should be employed. (The Chiefs of Staff eventually, decided, however, that nothing should be done, on account of the delicate situation with the Portuguese Govt. over Timor.)

HOBART, escorting B.M.9A, left Colombo for Singapore p.m. today.

China.

C. in C. Far East has been instructed to ensure that the dispositions of the Dutch land and air forces in N.E.I are such as to provide adequate protection for really important strategic localities, in particular the aerodromes covering Malacca and Sundra Straits.

The Chiefs of Staff "feel that they must get reinforcements into Malaya while air situation permits."

Philippines. The enemy continues to land reinforcements. The main Japanese effort is reported to have developed in the Lingayen area. The enemy have landed at ? Antimovast S.E. of Luzon on Lamon Bay and heavy fighting is in progress. Manila port area was bombed shortly before noon today (local time); the military authorities are considering declaring Manila an open city. At Davao the Japanese have landed from 3 to 4 transports.

Borneo. 5 Blenheims were sent to attack the enemy force off Kuching this morning and report a direct hit on a transport and 6 near misses 15 to 30 yards. The vessels sighted were 2 cruisers, one large destroyer, 8 transports, one tanker exuding oil and one sunken transport.

/Wake ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday

SITUATION REPORT.

China - contd.

Wake. A communication has been received from Wake Island since the Japanese were reported landing.

Australia and New Zealand.

A Japanese landing or bombardment was reported at 0210Z today at ? Abaiang, Gilbert Is. one cruiser is reported to be present.

The Flag of F.O.C. Australian Squadron was transferred to AUSTRALIA today.

U-Boat Campaign.

A U.S. army bomber claims to have destroyed a U-boat off the Columbia River today.

S.S. ABSAROKA was hit by a torpedo p.m. today in approx. 34° N. 118° W, but although badly damaged she reached San Pedro under tow.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Patrol Boats, Brightlingsea. — Your 2018A/23. This matter is being considered. (D.S.V.P. 2104A/24 to C. in C. Nore).

Co-operation with Russia.

Officers and ratings from EDINBURGH KENT to be lent S.B.N.O. North Russia. — My 1051A/24 and S.B.N.O. Archangel 1345C/22. Request officer, communication ratings, books and stores for the 3 icebreakers may be sent to Scapa by 30/12 for passage in escort of convoy P Q 8. (C. in C. H.F. 1055A/24 to Admty.)

Minesweepers for U.S.S.R. — C. in C. Northern Fleet requests full description of minesweepers to be transferred to U.S.S.R. Request Lieut. Comdr. Vickers may be lent to me for instructional duties. (S.B.N.O. North Russia, 1142C/24 to Adm. Miles).

Shipping information. — Ref. M.E.W. tel. No.2477 addressed to Madrid repeated Kuibishev. Representations being made to Soviet D.C.N.S. for supply of the information required. Most desirable that brief periodical summary of Axis shipping should be sent to me for transmission to Soviet Naval Staff.
(Ad. Miles, 1210D/24 to Admty.)

Movements.

ARCHER. — Cancel my 1824A/23. ARCHER has been delayed about a week. Further arrangements with regard to escort will be promulgated when date of sailing is known. (D.O.D.(H) 1225A/24 to C. in C. W.A.)

ILLUSTRIOUS. — Cancel my 1015A/22 ILLUSTRIOUS should arrive Bar L.V. before dark 29/12 and anchor for the night. Re. proceeding up harbour etc.
(N.O.i/c Liverpool 1748/24).

H.31. — R/V 180° Lizard 5 miles daylight/25 with Z5. T.B.R. arranged within 20 miles of this position from 0800 until further notice.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 2159A/24 to H.31)
Note. See also Casualties & Defects.
Return to Falmouth by outward route reporting P.C. and S. when north of 049° N.
(N.O.I.C. Falmouth 2345A/24 to H.31).

Operations.

Biscay S/M. patrol. — My 2053/23. Request you will sail 0.10 and 0.21 escorted by CUTTY SARK as soon as possible for Wolf Rock and Patrol. Further details will be

/signalled ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Biscay S/M. patrol. (contd.)

signalled. Submarines should be ordered to continue to read H S Routines while in harbour. (F.O.S. 0004A/24 to F.O.i/c Milford Haven).
F.O.S. 1534A/23 and 2054A/23.
H.32 and H.43 sailed for positions 20 and 29 respectively through position 180° Lizard 20' thence H.32 proceeds direct and H.43 through 47° 40' N. 06° 35' W. to patrol positions.
(F.O.i/c Falmouth 0245/24 to S/M's Area A).
My 0245/24. Escorted by M/ST CHILTERN to 180° Lizard 3 miles.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 0250/24 to C. in C. Plymouth).
Proceed to vicinity Wolf Rock escorted by LA CAPRICIEUSE thence to Patrol in Biscay. Orders for Patrol will be signalled. On arrival Wolf Rock LA CAPRICIEUSE return to Holy Loch. 0.9, pass to LA CAPRICIEUSE.
(F.O.S. 1016A/24 to O.9, LA CAPRICIEUSE).
After passing through position 20 proceed to patrol in position 23.
(F.O.S. 1116A/24 to H.32 (R) S/M's Area A).
Admty. 2037A/23. URSULA is on patrol about 120 miles S.West of Brest. 2 'H' Class arriving patrol in this vicinity A.M./25. I hope to be able to sail about 9 further S/Ms within the next two or three days. (F.O.S. 1129A/24 to C. in C. H.F.)
A. The object of submarines on patrol and sailing for patrol in Bay of Biscay is to attack. Then report enemy Cruisers and Battle Cruisers. Submarines are not to be attacked unless their hostile identity is absolutely certain.
B. When weather conditions permit submarines should patrol in an approx. N.- E. and S.- W. direction within 5 miles of their patrol positions.
(F.O.S. 1323A/24 to S/M's on patrol in area A. F.O.I.C.Milford Haven F.O.I.C.Falmouth, ALECTO.
My 2322A/23. When ready submarines should be sailed to fill patrol positions in following order of priority. 31, 28, 25, 22, 21, 20.
(F.O.S. 1326A/24 to F.O.I.C.Falmouth).

Search for tanker by VANOC.

Tanker escorted by Junkers 88 reported in territorial waters in vicinity of Cape Ortegal by Sunderland. Fuel situation will soon be critical. Am returning to Milford Haven via Hartland Point. Junkers now shadowing VANOC. Request repetition B N 703. Position and weather report respectively follow 043° 57' N. 007° 52' W.
(VANOC 1009A/24 to C. in C. Plymouth).
Enemy aircraft bombing. (VANOC 1020/24).
My position now is (course and speed) 044° 04' N. 007° 58' W. 110° 12 knots. (VANOC 1025/24).
A/C reports position of Tanker at 0925 43° 55' N. 07° 50' W. (C. in C. Plymouth 1044/24 to VANOC).
Have split seam and small leak in 23 station in ships bottom. (VANOC 1048A/24 to C. in C. W.A., N.O.i/c Liverpool, Capt. (D) Liverpool.
Your 1044A. Two merchant ships of 4000 tons were

/about ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Search for tanker by VANOC. (contd.)

about this position at 0930A, neither of these were tankers. Sunderland signalled tankers in bay. Must return for fuel. Junker has attacked and missed and is now homing other on to me. (VANOC 1128A/24 to C. in C. Plymouth).
Your 1009/24. Proceed to Gibraltar at best speed. (C. in C. Plymouth 1224/24 to VANOC).
Am proceeding to Gibraltar. E.T.A.1200/26. (VANOC 1620A/24 to C. in C. Plymouth).

WITHERINGTON.

Return to Harbour. (R.A.1.C.S., 1651N/24 to WITHERINGTON N.C.S.O. Sydney, C.B, RENOWN, WALKER, A.C.1.C.)

C.W.62, Shelled.

Enemy coastal batteries fired 24 rounds between 2011 and 2039 at C.W.62 when off Dover. All rounds fell in the sea, 16 to the east and 8 to the west of Dover Harbour. No casualties or damage reported. (V.A.Dover 2334A/24).

British Air Operations.

Enemy Tanker.

Have attacked enemy tanker with 4 bombs (level) and estimated no hits, in 43° 55' N. 7° 50' W. (A/C O.Q.7.S. 0925/24 to 19 Group H.Q.)

Bomber Command Operations.

Day 23rd. No operations took place.
Night 23/24th. 35 Wellingtons and 8 Stirlings attacked the naval units at Brest. Ostend Docks 8 Wellingtons attacked. Dunkirk Docks 2 Wellingtons bombed the docks.
Minelaying. 6 Hampdens laid mines successfully. Two Wellingtons attacked Calais Docks. (H.Q.B.C. 1357/24).

Operation "Archery."

Stirlings will not take part in Operation. (C. in C. Bomber Command 1830/24 to C. in C. H.F.)

Bombing restrictions.

Cancel my 1514/23. (F.O.I.C.Falmouth 1929/24).

?Operation "Anklet."

AP/377 24/12. Your T.O.O. 0937A/20 (N.T.) fighter escort will be provided from 0915 hours to 1600 on day (1) either by a section of three Beaufighters or a section of two Beaufighters and a section of two Blenheims at A.O.C. 18 Group's discretion. (H.Q.C.C., 2041/24 to C.S.10).

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HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Operations.

VANOC. — Enemy Aircraft Bombing. (VANOC 1020/24).

H.33. — Enemy Aircraft bombing H.33 1025. (A/C 0Q73. 1040/24).

Xmas Day precautions. — Special care is to be taken against enemy trying to surprise us by air attack on Christmas Day. (C. in C. H.F. 2259A/24 to General at Scapa (R) A.C.O.S.)

Mining.

Operation Q O. — My 2303A/23 owing to weather propose cancelling operations today. (M.S.9. 0741/24).

S.S.ROKOS VERGOTTIS. — Entire crew were landed at Great Yarmouth p.m./23. (F.O.i/c Gt. Yarmouth 1006A/24).

Tees & Hartlepool. — Negative my 1815/21. Ports of Tees and Hartlepool now open. Normal procedure resumed. (N.O.I.C. Hartlepool, 1140/24).

S N 26 C — Details of lay. (R.A.(M), 1216/24).

Thames Estuary. — My 1830A/11. The following additional patrols will be instituted. Patrol C between 57D buoy and 56A buoys. Patrol D between 56A and 54G buoys.
2. It is not expected that sufficient destroyers will be available to carry out all these patrols on any one night. Positions will therefore be filled as may seem most expedient in the light of existing circumstances.
3. If patrol D is required it will normally be carried out by the emergency destroyer from Harwich or Sheerness. (C. in C. Nore 1400A/24 to D.16 D.21 F.O.I.C.Humber Repeated F.O.I.C.Yarmouth C. in C. Rosyth, Admty.)
There was some enemy air activity over the Estuary between 1810 and 1940/23.
Some six plots of enemy aircraft were obtained. These were for the most part in the outer estuary though several aircraft were sighted and heavily engaged in the Southern end of the Barrow Deep.
At 1829 a parachute mine was observed to fall probably in the Swept Channel and near the wreck buoy marking the wreck of S.S.BRADGLEN between B.2 and B.3 buoys. This wreck buoy is very bright and most noticeable from the air.
Aircraft was estimated to have been at about 3,000 feet. The night was clear with a young moon, although there was some surface haze.
(S.O.T.L.D.F.Sheerness 1418/24).

/Confirming ...

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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Thames Estuary. (contd.)

Confirming telephone message today S.S.OLEV reports two parachute mines seen one mile three cables 076° from East Spile buoy at 1809 date not given. Unable obtain date. Please confirm you have already been informed.
(F.O.I.C.London 1740/24 to X.D.O.Sheerness).
Your 1740/24 S.S.OLEV reported particulars of these mines laid on 21/12/41 to examination vessel.
(X.D.O.Sheerness 1830/24 to F.O.I.C.London).

B.S.26.

Your 1244/20. 1 The number of mines found in B.S.26 indicates a wastage of over 50%.
2. Line B.S.28 originally contained the same number of mines as Line B.S.26 but spread over a distance of 6 miles.
3. A similar wastage in Line B.S.28 would represent a remaining density of 12 mines per mile.
4. This is considered to be inadequate and Line B.S.28 must be swept up.
(A.C.N.S.(H) 1638A/24 to C. in C. Nore).

S.S.EASTWOOD.

S.S.EASTWOOD mined in 104° Aldeburgh light 2½ miles.
(WALPOLE 1809A/24 to C. in C. Nore).
Your 1809 tugs are being sent from Harwich.
(C. in C. Nore 1901A/24 to WALPOLE).
My 1809 S.S.EASTWOOD floating with both anchors down Have 13 survivors on board. Please send Tug.
(WALPOLE 1835A/24 to C. in C. Nore, Repeated LEEDS, Ships employed on East Coast Convoy duties.)
Departure KENIA and CHAMPION to assist.
(F.O.I.C.Harwich 2003A/24).
Have transferred survivors to BASSET. BASSET ordered to stand by EASTWOOD. Fair chance salvage. Am rejoining convoy. (WALPOLE 2021A/24 to C. in C. Nore).

S.S.STANMOUNT, S.S.MERCHANT.

Your 2207A 24th. Tug being sent from Yarmouth now.
(C. in C. Nore 2247A/24 to WHADDON).
Departure DIVERSION and KROOMAN at 2350A to assist S.S.STANMOUNT and one other merchant vessel in distress 1 mile North No.6 Buoy.
(F.O.I.C.Great Yarmouth 2359A/24).

Humber area.

LL Trawlers ROLLS ROYCE HENRIETTE and WILLIAM BELL exploded the following 8 magnetic mines 24/12.
(F.O. Humber 2127/24).

Enemy Intelligence.

Brest.

R/C of Brest shows SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN still in dock. GNEISENAU has undocked and may sail shortly. (F.O.S. 0003A/24 to S/M's on patrol in Area A.)

/Tanker.....

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence. - contd.

Tanker. PPP FRL Tanker Admiralty 2335A/23 Most Secret refers. (N.T. in W.D.) 43° 45' N. 7° 52' W. in harbour photographed. (A/C WS6K 1055/24).

Navigational.

56 Buoy. 56 Buoy reported damaged and extinguished. Request Q Z H. (C. in C. Nore 1203A/24 to Admty.)

B 7 L.B. Trinity House reports B7 Light Buoy alight but unreliable. (F.O.I.C.Harwich 1641A/24 to Admty. (R) C. in C. Nore.)

Casualties & Defects.

TETCOTT, HEARTSEASE. Your 2255A/23rd remains with HEARTSEASE until tug CAROLINE MOLLER joins at daylight. Inform N.O.I.C.Greenock estimated daylight position. (C. in C. W.A. 0032A/24 to TETCOTT). Estimated daylight position of TETCOTT and HEARTSEASE 300° Skerryvore 5 miles. (F.O.I.C.Greenock 0259A/24). Position of HEARTSEASE at 0745A/24 280° Skerryvore 16 miles steering 265° at 2 knots. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0849A/24 to CAROLINE MOLLER). Position of HEARTSEASE at 1021A today 286° Skerryvore 15' now lying stern to sea. Imperative you make contact with all despatch. Acknowledge. (F.O.I.C.Greenock 1137A/24 to CAROLINE MOLLER). Am making for Clyde at best speed VERVAIN standing by HEARTSEASE damaged my ship's D/F gravely (displaced)(?) ? ? E.T.A. (TETCOTT 0645A/24/to C. in C. W.A. F.O.I.C. Greenock). CAROLINE MOLLER reports Addressed C. in C. W.A. F.O.i/c Greenock, repeated Admty. Rescue Tugs. From CAROLINE MOLLER. On R/V position 0800 to 1200 W.N.W'ly gale bow plate strained and D.G. disorganized. Temporary repairs in shelter off Tiree. Will proceed with all haste for new position. 1500 G.M.T/24 ends. Weather is expected to moderate. RESTIVE is being sailed to you from Campbeltown. Report any change in position. Your 1630A (+) acknowledged. (F.O.I.C.Greenock 1915A/24 to HEARTSEASE) (+) N.T. in W.R. Sail RESTIVE with all despatch to assist HEARTSEASE damaged in collision in 294° Skerryvore 13.5 miles. VERVAIN is standing by and CAROLINE MOLLER may be searching if her defects have been completed. HEARTSEASE with (?will) home tug by D/F. (F.O.I.C.Greenock 1923A/24 to N.O.I.C.Campbeltown). Signalling arrangements. Position of HEARTSEASE at 1530 G.M.T. was 294° 13.5 miles from Skerryvore. Acknowledge. (F.O.I.C.Greenock 1943A/24 to CAROLINE MOLLER, RESTIVE, & 1945A/24 to HEARTSEASE).

/Have ...

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HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

TETCOTT, HEARTSEASE. (Contd.) — Have made contact with HEARTSEASE also acknowledge 1943A/24. (CAROLINE MOLLER 2300 G.M.T./24 to C. in C. W.A.)

S.S.BINTANG. — Following has been received addressed Admiral Plymouth. Intercept. 0509 G.M.T. Valencia Radio to Wick Radio. Campbeltown is broadcasting SOS QRM very bad think position is 43.25 N. 23.10 W. can't say whether its MDDI or PDDI BINTANG lifeboat smashed. Not rebroadcast.
(Lands End Radio 0614/24).
Following received from Lands End Radio: Important Admiral Plymouth.
Important intercept 0512 G.M.T. DE unknown station probably VCE or VCS begins. S.O.S. DE PDDI (BINTANG) 43 unread No.1 hold unread broken off may unread dangerous lifeboat smashed require assistance speed 4 knots bearing from VCE 205 approx. Remainder unread. Not re-broadcast.
(Lands End Radio 0617/24 to Admty.)

M.F.V.MARGARET HAMILTON. — Sunk in collision with WANDERER. Salvage operations are being instituted, but it is not anticipated that hull will be serviceable again. Another 50 ft. M.F.V. is urgently required for D.E.M.S. duties.
(F.O.i/c Greenock 0951A/24).

NIGER. — Defects. (R.A.D. 1146A/24).
NIGER has now been out of action for five months with this defect. In view of defects and damage occurring in other Fleet Sweepers NIGER is urgently required.
Request ships may be sent to a Royal Dockyard for thorough investigation and repair.
(C. in C. H.F. 1902A/24 to Admty.)

EMPIRE MARLOWE. — My position at 1200 060° 16' N. (?022°) 008° (?8') W. have not yet located S.S.MARLOW (sic) (?Request aircraft may assist search.
(SNOWDROP 1230A/24 to A.C.I.C.)
FREEBOOTER reports EMPIRE MARLOW in tow 1330 in 60° 20' N. 21° 38' W. Ordered to proceed U.K.
Aircraft sighted EMPIRE MARLOW in 060° 40' N. 021° 40' W. at 1225.
(A.C.I.C. 1609n/24, TRAIL 1730Z/24).
Have met TRAIL and S.S.MARLOW in tow of FREEBOOTER. Request instructions for TRAIL TENACITY and SNOWDROP. (SNOWDROP 2340A/24 to C. in C. W.A.)

FISKAREN. — Convoy servicing motor fishing vessel FISKAREN sunk last night in collision no hope salvage.
(F.O.i/c Belfast 1235/24).

/M.T.B's.....

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HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects. - contd.

M.T.B's 54, 56, 51.	A.M.1524A/12 and R.A.C.F. 1645/18. M.T.B's 54 and 51 arrived eventually on 21st and 22nd respectively. Both required engines changing and defects taken in hand and will not be ready for service for several days at least. M.T.B.56 has not yet arrived. As the state of the 11th Flotilla is thus unsatisfactory and the work on repairs occupies the time of the Base staff to the detriment of the maintenance of other coastal craft it is recommended that no further boats of this Flotilla should be sent to Dover until a sufficient period has elapsed to show that they are reliable and ready in all respects for action 54 and 51 being sailed for Portland to rejoin Flotilla when ready. (V.A.Dover 1238A/24 to Admty.)
BIDEFORD.	Sailed LULWORTH. BIDEFORD has returned with A/S defects. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 1523A/24).
RANPURA.	Damage due to fire 24/12 is estimated to require 17 days to repair. Ship will probably not be ready to sail with W.S.15. (S.O.W.P. 1716A/24).
O.21.	I understand it is unlikely that O.21 is fit for patrol. In view of the grave emergency I would be glad if you would arrange for Dutch engineer and electrical officers to visit the S/M at Milford Haven at the earliest possible moment and for them to report if any steps can be taken to make her fit for patrol within the next few days. (F.O.S. 1914A/24 to S.O.D.S.)
O.9.	Tooth wheel of transmission of lubricating and circulating pump starboard engine broken down. Engine out of action. Spares not on board. Intend return Milford Haven for repairs. (O.9 2030A/24).
WANDERER.	WANDERER can be taken in hand for damage repairs at Falmouth A.M./26 and is to be sailed accordingly. Ship is required for escort duty leaving North Channel on 3/1. (C. in C. W.A. 2057A/24 to F.O.I.C.Greenock).
H.31 overdue.	H.31 was ordered to leave vicinity of 46° 48' N. 10° 30' W. after dark/21 routed through 47° 59' N. 08° 04' W. and 49° N. 07° 40' W. to R/V in 180° Lizard 5 miles at 0900/24. H.31 has not yet arrived and may be in difficulties and on the surface. I do not intend to ask for T.B.R. to cover this route but I should be grateful if any aircraft which may be operating in the vicinity could be warned to keep a look out for H.31 and for any sighting of her to be reported to me as soon as possible. (F.O.S.2201A/24 to H.Q.C.C. (R) Admty. C. in C. Plymouth. F.O.I.C.Falmouth. ALECTO.)

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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

S C 59. Ships not present. EMPIRE SELWYN, JOBSHAVEN, IRISH LARCH, LANGLEECRAG, NORTH DEVON, CYDONIA, DIMITRIOS, CHANDRIS, CONDYLIS AGIOI VICTORES, EMPIRE UNITY, NADIN, IRON BARON, ST. BERNARD. (DOUGLAS 1015A/24 to C. in C. W.A.)

Russian convoy. Russian convoy (details) may also pass through your Patrol area tonight. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 1242C/24 to SHARPSHOOTER).

PASTEUR. PASTEUR left convoy 0230/19 as ship had severe damage and was unmanageable at convoy speed rolling 44 degrees. Failed to contact escort at M.O.M.P.
Captain considered the safest course was to proceed North and then follow standard route.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde 1544/24 to Admty.)

P Q 7. Sailing delayed. Further signal will be made. (A.C.I.C. 1634N/24).

S.S. CUBA. Your 1811A. S.S. CUBA not met. My position 055° 52' N. 007° 21' W. proceeding to Newcastle-on-Tyne. (HAVELOCK 1910A/24 to C. in C. W.A.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Diversion of Vigo-Gib. Cable.

Your 1114/23 and my 2115/22. Change of operation was due to political and not technical considerations. Requirement is now to provide connection through to Gibraltar and not Lisbon.
(D.S.D. 0057A/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Departure MIRROR escorted by COLTSFOOT to carry out in accordance with A.M. 1249A/19 and 0057A/24 in addition repairs to Fayal San Miguel cable will be carried out in approx. 037° 41' N. 025° 51 W. (F.O.C.N.A. 1020A/24).

VANOC.

Your 1009/24. Proceed to Gibraltar at best speed. (C. in C. Plymouth 1224/24 to VANOC).
Keep well clear of:-
(1) S/M P.39 position 2000A/24 035° 58' 010° 10' 092° diving by day 25th speed submerged 2½ knots.
(2) S/M P.36 position 2000A/24 038° 03' 010° 35' through 36.40 10.25 thence 103° diving by day 25th from position 37.00 10.25 speed submerged 2½ knots.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1546/24 to VANOC, EGRET, Capt. (S) 8, Admty, C. in C. Plymouth.)
VANOC off Cape Ortegal at 1228A/24th has been ordered to Gibraltar by shortest route at best speed. She has been given your movements.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1606A/24 to P.36, P.39).

TOTLAND S.L. 95.

TOTLAND steering position D course 024° S. of A. 8, expect to rejoin Convoy S.L. 95 at 1300N/25th.
(N.C.S.O. P. Delgada, 1450/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)

FARADAY.

FARADAY ran into heavy weather after leaving Gibraltar and has returned with the remainder of the convoy. Proposed movements will be signalled.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1618A/24 to Admty., C. in C. S.A.)

PLUTON.

Your 1736A/17th and your 1052A/18th. PLUTON is Naval vessel and cannot be required to have a Navicert.
Destination of ship. Cargo about 1,000 tons crude oil for refinery. Nothing wrong. Navy is desperate for fuel and cannot get what it wants from Campsa.
Spain bought rest of this cargo some time ago with our knowledge. (N.A. Madrid 1830/24 to S.O. (I) Gibraltar).

COWSLIP.

COWSLIP ran aground nine miles Gibraltar 22/12. Refloated and brought to Dockyard. Dry docked 23/12. Extensive hull damage. Internal structural damage still under survey. Intend temporarily repairing hull and refloating in about 14 days to release dry dock. Complete repairs will take two to three months mostly in dry dock. Completion date uncertain.
(C.S. Gibraltar 2018A/24)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

INDOMITABLE.
U.S. Forces.

It appears from Admiralty plot that INDOMITABLE and American Forces ex. W.S. 12 X may be passing through the same area. Not known here whether they have been mutually informed. (A.C.N.S. (F) 0205A/24 to C. in C. S.A.)

WOODRUFF.

If you can make good 8 knots proceed towards Freetown. If not proceed Takoradi. Report situation. (C. in C. S.A. 0909Z/24 to WOODRUFF (R) N.O.I.C. Takoradi).

U.S. QUINCY
U.S. VINCENNES
INDOMITABLE.

U.S. Cruiser QUINCY and U.S. Cruiser VINCENNES with 6 destroyers left Capetown 0500/16 proceeding by great circle for (corrupt group) 012° 50' N. 060° 00' W. speed 17 knots. (C. in C. S.A. 1205Z/24 to INDOMITABLE).
From Myfot these forces appear to be well clear but as B.A.D. Washington has both routes presume he has informed Opnav. I have informed INDOMITABLE. (C. in C. S.A. 1257Z/24 to Admty.)

RAMILLIES.

Fuel consumption and endurance.
(C. in C. S.A. 1831Z/24)

Siamese
Vessel.

Your 2230Z/23rd Siamese vessel reports engine defect and is making for Rio de Janeiro.
(S.O.(I) Montevideo 1931Z/24 to BULOLO).

DEVONSHIRE.

DEVONSHIRE leaves Freetown A.M./26 to join CANTON and CILICIA for patrol in H.33. (C. in C. S.A. 2025Z/24 to Admty.)

Mediterranean.

M.T. store
ships.

Details of cargoes. (W.O. 0530/24 to C. in C. India.)

Distress
Signal
VARVARA.

S.O.S. From ship position 40 W.N.W. of Alex investigate. (A/C using Call Sign 6 FJ 0821/24 to Call sign L2L).
Proceed with despatch to assist S.S. VARVARA reported in position W.N.W. Alexandria 40 in company at 0525Z/24. (C. in C. Med., 0831B/24 to NIZAM).
S.S. VARVARA in position 295° Ras-el-tin 28.
Am escorting her to Alexandria speed (?5 knots).
(IMBERLEY, 0931B/24 to NIZAM, C. in C. Med. etc.)

/Proceed.....

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Distress Signal VARVARA. - Contd.

Proceed with all despatch assistance of S.S. VARVARA reported in position 40 miles W.N.W. Alexandria at 0725B today. ST. MONANCE sailing at 0900 and NIZAM and KIMBERLEY are also proceeding to VARVARA. (V.A. Alexandria 0925B/24 to AURORA II).
VARVARA arrived Alexandria in tow ST. MONANCE. (R.A. Alexandria 1508B/24).

D.7.

One Sunderland will co-operate with you from 1000/23rd for as long as required. Frequency 6540 Kc/s. (R.A. (D) Med. 0857B/24 to Capt. D.7).

HEYTHROP.

HEYTHROP 1624B/23 (N.T) Well Done.
(C. in C. Med., 0955B/24 to HASTY, HOTSPUR (R) HEYTHROP, etc.)

Suda Bay.

11 ships reported in Suda Bay. Troops may be embarking. (S.1, 1005B/24 to OSIRIS (R) S/Ms on Patrol, FORESIGHT).

SOKOL, patrol report.

1. SOKOL reports, from 1130 until 1200/19 heavy rain squall reduced visibility and rain on calm sea prevented effective listening watch.
2. At 1200/19 in 039° 14' 017° 49' sighted 2 battleships 2 CONDOTTIERI cruisers and 10 destroyers range 10,000 yards course 295°. Squadron obscured by rain squall until abeam attack not possible. Escort ship hunted SOKOL using ranging charge but no attack developed.
3. At 0025/22 sighted red recognition lights burnt twice nothing seen or heard on hydrophones in spite of 15 minutes search. Observed similar lights but white at 2100/22 in position 36.11 15. 30 propeller noises heard for 3 minutes good visibility nothing seen. (Capt. S.10 1034B/24).

Minefields.

A report graded D.O states that contact mines have been laid in the following three areas:-

A. Between 32° N. and 33° N. and between 15° E. and 17° E.
B. Between 32° N. and 33° N. and between 18° 30' E. and 20° E.
C. Between 32° 25' N. and 32° 45' N. and 20° 15' E. and 20° 45' E.

Positions are approximate. Nationality of mines not stated. (D.D.I.C. 1255A/24 to C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta, F.O.C.N.A., Force H, C.O.I.S., Alexandria).

/Action.....

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean-Contd.

Action off Jibuti.

French ship ELORN was noted off Jibuti on 23/12. Ship refused to obey international signal to stop and both ships opened fire. ELORN then broke off action and returned to Jibuti.
(ii) At 0700/24th NETRAVATI sighted one S/M escorted by BOUGAINVILLE approaching Jibuti. BOUGAINVILLE warned NETRAVATI that she would open fire if latter approached. Further details awaited. (C. in C. Med. 1350B/24 to Admty.)

Vichy sloop and S/M.

Sloop possibly D'IBERVILLE and PASCAL Class submarine arrived Jibuti this morning 24th. (F.F.N.L.O. Aden 1519Z/24 to F.N.F.L. London).

PHENIX. VILJA.

Tanker PHENIX blew up in Haifa harbour at 1400/24 whilst leaving her berth and set fire to tanker VILJA. Oil still fiercely burning and harbour entrance now closed. While present westerly wind prevails other shipping in harbour is safe. (N.O.I.C. Haifa 1530C/24, C. in C. Med., 2037B/25).

U-boat off Bardia.

Following received begins. D/F bearings indicate presence of German submarine off Bardia at 0412 G.M.T./24. 201 Naval Co-operation Group informed T.O.O. 0958/24th Ends.
(S.O. Force I 1634/24 to AVON VALE, KIMBERLEY).

M.T.B's shipped.

M.T.B's 259 and 260 shipped S.S. WEST IRA 24/11/41 and M.T.Bs. 263 and 264 S.S. BIENVILLE 20/12/41 both New York/ Suez. M.T.B's 261 and 262 shipped S.S. HARDANGER 18/12/41 New York/ Alexandria. (D.D.O.D. (C) 1649A/24 to C. in C. Med.)

Situation at Haifa.

My 1530/24 Situation 1730C/24. PHENIX burning and settling. VILJA upper work burnt but fire under control at present tanks not fired. Attempt is being made to tow VILJA clear. Following ships have got out of harbour, ATHENE, HOPESTAR, THORDIS, ARMADALE, BRITISH SAILOR, ATHENE with FALK sailed to Port Said E.T.A. 1200/25 ARAMURA sailed independently to Port Said E.T.A. 1400/25 THORDIS to sail to Beyrout with VICTORIAN E.T.A. 0700/25. (N.O.I.C. Haifa 1732C/24 to C. in C. Med.)

Air Sweep.

Long range Swordfish leave Sidi Barrani to be in 31° 35' N. 26° 40' E. at 1730. Sweep to 32° 00' N. 26° 10' E. to 32° 15' N. 25° 00' E. to 080° Tobruk 10 miles to 32° 10' N. 25° 00' E. to Sidi Barrani. (C. in C. Med. 1802B/24 to Med. Fleet, Force I).

/Mining.....

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean-Contd.

Mining of Malta.	V.A. Malta's 2033B/23. Request information on para. six. (C. in C. Med. 1839B/24 to Admty.) Your 2033B/23 para. 6 only known cases of Type "T" from aircraft have been seaplanes alighting on water. Considered improbable that this type could be used in flight. Both Type "T" and Type "C" with its various assemblies can be laid by E-boats. (D.T.M. 2355A/24 to V.A. Malta).
Malta Air Report.	1635/23. 2 Bombers. 1852 10 Raiders bombs land and possibly minelaying, civilian damage. 4 Wellingtons mark 2 nuisance raid Tripoli 1830 to 0425 hours. Tripoli harbour and town covered by smoke screen. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1855/24). 3 alerts 0746 hours 36 fighters escorting 4 JU 88's which attacked Grand Harbour 1 bomb hit merchant vessel another AJAX superficial damage no naval casualties. 1101 hours 30 ME. 109 escorting 4 JU. 88 second attack Grand Harbour bombs sea no damage. 1353 hours 5 fighters 1 JU. 88 crossed coast no bombs dropped. (H.Q. Malta 1857/24).
Operation B.S.	Bring into force condition B. (Capt. (S) 1, 1945B/24 to S/M's on Patrol).

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Rangoon.

Rangoon bombed 1030 to 1100 hours 23/12. 15 fires started in the town. Believe 4 enemy aircraft shot down. No other details. (C.in C. India 0005/24 to W.O.).

Enemy shipping at Goa, proposed cutting out expedition.

Personal for C.I.G.S. from Gen. Wavell repeat C.in C. E.I.
Goa. Present position is intolerable as a number of German ships are lying in harbour and their crews are at large. Wireless station is utilized continuously and there is a grave danger of leakage of information. There have been reports though not confirmed that port has been recently used by an enemy submarine. Possible alternatives are to:-
(a) Request that wireless station be shut down. This we are entitled to do but previous requests have met with no response.
(b) Put in hand "cutting out" operations to seize enemy ships. This is the only possible way getting them intact and avoiding danger of clash with Portuguese.
(c) Occupy colony with land forces. These could later be withdrawn subject to conditions which would ensure control over use of wireless and of harbour and also internment of crews of enemy ships. It is unlikely to secure enemy ships intact.
(d) To put pressure on Portuguese to take action themselves or to allow us to do so with their connivance. Last named course renders surprise impossible and increases possibility resistance result of which will be unfortunate. It will also permit of escape or scuttling of German ships which we hope to avoid. We therefore recommend course B and consider that in view of entry of Japan and U.S.A. into war that political effects of such action can now be disregarded.
(C.in C. India 0130/24 to W.O.).
Personal for Gen. Wavell.
Your 1330/23.
(1) I am unable to agree with conclusion reached in alternative B.
(2) The German and Italian crews in Goa outnumber the European residents and are known to be on alert. Furthermore the ships will in accordance with their practice be ready for fire and scuttle at very short notice.
(3) While operation is feasible resistance is to be expected and from our experience at Bandar Shahpur a considerable force equipped for fire fighting will be required to overcome resistance and save ships.
(4) Should fighting occur a clash with Portuguese would appear to be almost inevitable particularly in view of Timor adventure.

/ 5. I.....

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Enemy shipping at Goa, proposed cutting out expedition. -Contd.

5. I suggest primary object is to remove subversive element in Goa rather than capture ships. I do not consider a cut out operation would achieve this since we are unlikely to be able to prevent at least some crew from escaping ashore where they will be out of our reach.
6. My view is that half measure will be disastrous. If it is decided to clear up the situation it is essential both naval and land forces should be employed.
7. Has my chief of staff been consulted on this appreciation?
War Office pass Admiralty.
(C.in C. E.I. 1308/24 to C.in C. India).

Diego Garcia.

Hydrographic information Diego Garcia is recommended as suitable for use for aircraft carriers and large cruisers. Entrance will be swept to 5 fathoms very early and further reports submitted on completion.
(CLIVE 03512/24 to C.in C. E.I.).

Aerodromes Persian Gulf.

(1) R/C carried out by R.A.F. India on Persian shore only with view to developing Air reinforcements route. Intention also to provide for operations of aircraft against German threat to shipping in Gulf.
(2) In this connection see para. 4 and 5 our 17863/G of 14/11 which suggests priority to development ofstrip of Persian shore as opposed to Arabian shore.
(3) The reasons for this are given in our telegraphic summary 12330/G of 2/9 of detailed R/C of requirements for defence of Persian Gulf.
(4) We do not consider entry of Japan into war has modified these views as air operations against this threat could be satisfactorily carried out from Persian shore along which shipping is routed and not Arabian coast.
(5) Suggest therefore development should begin with aerodromes at Jask Bandar Abbas Lingeh Asalu detailed report on which is being sent separately with H.Q. R.A.F. India.
(C.in C. India. 0450/24 to H.Q.R.A.F.M.E.).

Threat to Aden.

No.15.
(1) I have seen signal from F.O.R.S. to N.O.I.C. stating that Admty. appreciation is that S/M threat to Aden is small and raider threat negligible. May I assume that:-
(A) There is no present possibility of Japanese attacking force of brigade or more being transported to within 1000 miles of Aden without being detected and brought to action, and
(B) you will inform me at once of situation

/deteriorates....

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Threat to Aden. -Contd.

deteriorates sufficiently to render such an operation possible.
(2) I ask this because A.O.C. has insufficient aircraft to patrol Gulf of Aden and garrison which is immobile has been so depleted that I doubt whether determined seaborne attack could be effectually resisted. Capture of Aden might paralyse our military effort in Middle East. (Govr. Aden 1012Z/24 to C.in C. E.I.).

A/S escorts Durban area.

A.M. 1627/23. For A.T. 1824A/4 read A.T. 1824A/24 November.
(D.O.D.(F) 1328A/24 to C.in C. E.I.).

Reinforcements for Malaya.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. (India) 12 to C.in C. India. Repeated C.in C. F.E. (Pass to C.in C. E.F.), C.in C. E.I. G.O.C. Malaya.
W.O. No. 59918 23 /12 crossed your 21592/G 23/12.
2. We have given further consideration to this question and feel that we must get reinforcements into Malaya while air situation permits. We therefore confirm that second brigade group of 17 Indian Division should go to Malaya.
3. Destination of remaining brigades 18 Division is still under consideration.
(1st S.L. 1341A/24 to C.in C. E.I.).

Sailing of Tankers from Rangoon.

It is reprted from commercial sources that you have ordered the sailing of all tankers from Rangoon. Is this correct?
(2) Present policy is to step up shipments of refined petroleum products from this port. It is also necessary to import some quantities of 100 octane spirit for R.A.F. use preferably from Pladjoe. Request your remarks.
(4th S.L. 1554A/24 to C.in C. E.I.).
Ref. A.M. 1554A/24. I have issued no such instructions.
(2) Subject to concurrence of C.in C. E.F. my intention is that tankers should be permitted to proceed to and from Rangoon as required. (C.in C. E.I. 1848Z/24 to Admty.).

S.S. WAIRUNA.

Have you any news of WAIRUNA due Colombo 18/12 from Fremantle?.
(D.T.D. 1905A/24 to S.O.(I) Colombo).

53rd Infy . Bdge.

Please pass our 59921 of 23/12 to C.in C. E.I.
(W.O. 2045/24 to C.in C. India).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

BANKA — Auxiliary M/S. Now appears was sunk by one of our own mines off Johore on 10/12. 6 survivors, Malay ratings landed at Pulo Tinggi Island. (D.O.R. 24/12).

Removal of petrol from Malaya. — Most urgent to move 29,000 tons aviation spirit from Pladjoe and Singapore and Pangkalan Brandan to M.E. and 43,000 tons components from Pladjoe and Singapore to Australia. Economically it would be preferable to send tankers from Australia to load these cargoes but if delay on ballast voyage is probable or if for any reason this course is unacceptable to you tankers can be despatched from Colombo. If you prefer first alternative request you will arrange direct with A.C.N.B. for despatch to loading ports of following four tankers BRITISH PRINCESS due Fremantle, ELSA and MARIDAL at Melbourne, VERA at Sydney.
(D.T.D. 0103A/24 to C. in C. E.F.)

Ships detailed to remove aviation spirit components from Balik-Papan. — Your 1608/21. PAN SCANDIA due Balik Papan 26/12 will lift total of 14,000 tons aviation spirit and components for Australia. Of remaining 4,000 tons Netherlands requires 2,000. Balance of 2,000 not sufficient to justify sending large tanker and A.P. Co. are endeavouring to arrange small tanker.
(C. in C. E.F. 0115Z/24 to Admty.)

K 14. — C. in C. Netherlands report that K 14 has sunk 3 large transports and one tanker off Sarawak coast. (C. in C. F.E. 0402Z/24 to Admty.)

Reinforcements for Malaya. — 60026 24/12. Following from Chiefs of Staff. Ref. C. in C. India, No. 21537/G 22/12+ and C. in C. F.E. unnumbered tel. ø dated 22/12. We have decided to accept recommendation by C. in C. F.E. and C. in C. E.F. that 53rd Inf. Brigade should proceed direct Malaya as suggested in alternative (a) of W.O. tel. No. 59407 20/12* This cannot be finally settled until we get the permission of American Authorities for their ship (MOUNT VERNON) to proceed direct to Malaya. 2. We have cabled the Prime Minister to ask for this urgently.
(W.O. 0200/24 1130/24 to C. in C. F.E.)
+ 2045/22, ø 2004/22, * C245/21.

Situation. — Sitrep No.14. 1630 G.M.T./23, includes:- Borneo. Sighting reports received 23/12 from Dutch and British aircraft indicate attack on Kuching imminent by force comprising at least 2 cruisers 3 destroyers, 10 transports. Destruction of aerodrome Kuching ordered, and air R/C and striking forces detailed to locate and attack

/convoy....

MOST SECRET.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Situation -Contd.

convoy first light 24/12.
(Adv. H.Q. M.C. 0509/24 to W.O. etc.). See Lion Copy.

Dutch land and air dispositions.

No. 60019 24/12.
Following from Chiefs of Staff No. F.E.64.
Please report dispositions of Dutch land and air forces in E.I. You should ensure that dispositions will provide adequate protection for really important strategic localities in particular the aerodrome areas covering Malacca and Sunda Straits.
(W.O. 1015/24 to C.in C. F.E.).

Air Operations.

Daily Operational Summary up to 1030/24/12.
No movement west coast recco to 4° 26' N.
Local A/S patrol. Diverging search to depth of 250 miles north east from Singapore negative report. Diverging search to depth 320 miles to coast North Borneo. 1 S/M believed to be Dutch seen at 1050 in 1° 21' N. 108° 32' E. 5 Blenheim IV despatched to attack enemy force off Kuching priority transports tanker warships. 1 direct hit on stern of transport 6 near misses 15 to 30 yards all our aircraft returned safely.
Enemy air activity negligible.
(A.H.Q. F.E. 1730/24).

America and West Indies.

Gilbert Is.

Japanese landing or bombardment reported at 0210Z/24 at (Abaiang) Gilbert Is. B.1.
One 8000 ton cruiser reported present. Type of ship grade C 2.
(N.O. Wellington 0236Z/24).

BINTANG distress.

Intercept DE VCE Cape Race Radio (begins).
S.O.S. BINTANG 43. 25 N. 53.10 W. in distress, lifeboat smashed, require immediate assistance bearings VCE Cape Race Radio 205 approx. VGS S. Paul Island 139 VAX Canso Radio 103. (Ends).
(Valentia Radio 0541/24 to Admty.).

Japanese vessel Chile.

N.A. Santiago's reference 1840/23. Informed A 4 Japanese cotton firm Peru received orders to have cotton ready to ship in Japanese

/convoy.....

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Japanese vessel Chile. -Contd.

convoy arriving Peru for cotton, Chile for nitrate and minerals. Japanese saw how many German ships tied up cruiser to guard them. Submit this might be same move. (S.O.(I) Callao 1050R/24 to Admty.).

Tank.

Large cylindrical tank floating in 937 North 5804 West at 1340 G.M.T./21. (Bermuda W/T 1133Q/24).

Situation in Far East.

Washops 14. (1) Philippine Islands.
In Aparri area Japanese have reached Tuguerara at Vigan they have made a R/C in force to Candon Main Japanese effort has developed in Lingayen area: Heavy fighting in Pangasinan: enemy ships reported off Batangas. Enemy landed? Antimovast (S.E. Luzon on Lamon Bay). Heavy fighting in progress.
In Legaspi area Japanese occupied Naga and Daet. Manila Port area was bombed shortly before noon/24 local time.
At Davao Japanese have landed from 3 to 4 transports. Returning from Darwin 9 B-17 bombers bombed Japanese Transport at Davao; result unknown.
(2) Hawaii 23/12 a S/M contact was depth charged in this area with indications that attack may have been successful.
(3) Wake Island communication has been received since Japanese were reported landing.
(4) Johnston Island. A report timed 0513/23 states island was being shelled by submarine.
(5) U.S. Pacific Coast. Further reports of S/M activity in this area. In approx. 035° 10' N. 121° W, tanker MONTEBELLO was sunk by torpedo early yesterday morning. Shortly before this tanker LARRY DOHENEY was attacked by torpedoes and gunfire without result. It seems probable these two attacks were carried out by same S/M.
S.S. PANAMA EXPRESS was twice attacked by torpedoes 30 miles west of San Diego during night 21/22 without result.
Admiralty pass to W.O. and Air Min.
(Joint Staff Mission, Washington 1337R/24).

Use of Brazilian ports by Canadian ships.

Repeating N.A. Rio de Janeiro 1841Z/19. (D.N.I. 1350A/24 to C.in C. A.W.I. C.in C. S.A. R.A.S.A.D. B.A.D. Washington. N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

/S.S.....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. - contd.

S.S. BARDALAND (Swedish). Trinidad intercept suggests carrying enemy cargo. Shipment to be effected approx. 21/11. Details. (S.O.(I) Jamaica. 1449R/24 to Admty.)

SOREL. (1) SOREL ordered to proceed with S C 62 to prudent limit thence to Greenock for completion of refit subsequently for training Tobermory.
(2) Completion of items will be signalled.
(C.C.N.F. 1501Z/24).

S.S.WYOMING. (French). St. Thomas arrival today S.S.WYOMING. St. Thomas reports may load 1600 tons oil fuel and general cargo mostly sugar for Casablanca via Guadeloupe and Martinique. (S.O.(I) Jamaica 1649R/24).

QUEEN OF BERMUDA. To sail from Norfolk for Bermuda on 28/12 by direct route to Bermuda. Ship is to report E.T.A. to C. in C. A. & W.I. direct together with report required by refit order number 703.
(B.A.R.M. 1738R/24).

Navigation lights. Your 2212Q/22 instruction that British and Allied merchant ships were not to show navigation lights in areas 8 and 10 except for dimmed navigation lights at discretion in coastal waters was issued by G.B.M.S. Time of origin 2340Z/7/12 and B.A.D. was informed of this. It was presumed you would have received text of G.B.M.S. from Captain i/c. Bermuda. (D.T.D. 1811A/24 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

St. Pierre taken over by Free French. In compliance with order quite recently received from General de Gaulle and request of inhabitants I have proceeded this morning to Island Saint Pierre and rallied people to Free France and allied cause with enthusiastic reception.
Unless otherwise ordered by Admty. ALYSSE and ACONITE will arrive St. Johns N.F. P.M./27.
(Adm. Muselier 1910z/24).

S.S.CARLIER. Dakar 23/12 B, 2. Arrived 22/12 Belgian CARLIER for Bordeaux or Antwerp. Master has indented for Charts of Vigo and Northern Spanish Ports.
Superstructure white, funnel buff, Hull light grey.
(B.A.D. 1913R/24 N.I.D.Comment: This ship has been reported several times since the beginning of July 1941 as about to proceed from Dakar to Bordeaux.)

Coastal routeing. Orders for coastal routeing so far issued cover only U.S.Flag and U.S. controlled vessels. Others may accept such routeing if they so desire.
OPNAV 2145Z/24).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand.

EMPRESS OF CANADA.

Your 1603M/23. As full escort not available New Zealand Govt. will only allow 100 R.N.Z.A.F. to embark, no R.A.A.F. embarked. Ship will be routed well South, no cover required. Normal routeing signal will be made. B.A.D.Washington pass to B.N.L.O. San Francisco.
(N.Z.N.B. 1450M/24 to B.A.D.)

Zigzagging.

Reference A.M. 1303/14. In order that information may be promulgated generally request you will state in which areas on your station merchant vessels proceeding independently are required to zigzag. (D.T.D. 1858A/24 to A.C.N.B., C. in C.E.F.)

Tankers.

Disposition tankers Australia Station 24/12. BRITISH SAILOR is 7 days overdue at Port Darwin.
(A.C.N.B. 1921/24 to Admty.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

MONTEBELLO
LARRY DOHENEY
PANAMA EXPRESS — See A. & W.I.

ABSAROKA. — Navy Dept. announced 24/12 that U.S. ABSAROKA, 5695 tons, had been attacked by U/B, presumed Japanese, off coast of California and abandoned in a sinking condition. 1 member of crew killed. (D.S. 843, 26/12.)

Submarines Reported.

1908/23. — U-Boat in 032° 06' N. 024° 46' E. at 1908/23. (C. in C. Med. 0021B/24 to Med. Fleet, Force I.)

Off Bardia. — 0412 G.M.T./24. See Mediterranean.

Tripoli. — Italian S/M bearings 190/2, working Tripoli (Africa). (V.A. Malta, 1010B/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)

1034. — Following has been read. P.C. and S. of enemy, one submarine on surface, 33.32 N., 24.58 E. * (A/C call sign K7TP, 1034/24.) * (?290°) 1 knot.

C. Verde Is. — Received reliable information that 2 S/Ms were sighted off Solamasa Bay St. Vincent, C.V., early 24th. (N.C.S.O. St. Vincent, C.V. 1135/24.)

1234B. — Position of enemy S/M 033° 30' N. 024° 32' E. course 290° speed 5 knots. (V.A. Malta 1234B/24.)

Estimated approx. positions of U/Bs. (D.D.I.C. 1357A/24, 1358/24.)

0132Z/22. — Cancel my 1306/22. Further evidence from other craft indicates Clipper was mistaken. (C. in C. E.I. 1430Z/24 to E.I. Station.)

Bay of Biscay — Several U.Boats may be leaving Bay of Biscay. 8 are bound for Bay of Biscay ports of which 6 are in following positions. (F.O.S. 1927A/24 to S/Ms on patrol Area A.)

/2012 ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported - contd.

2012 G.M.T. S/M bearing 315/2 sensed 26 groups at 2012 G.M.T. (V.A. Malta 2215B/24.)

Submarines Attacked.

1034B. P.C. and S. of U-Boat attacked by aircraft 1034B today 033° 32' 024° 58' 290° 5 knots. Acknowledge. Surface tonight. (Capt. (S) 1, 1431B/24 to PROTEUS, THUNDERBOLT.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

U.S. C.N.O. has agreed as a temporary measure that Canadian escorts for S.C. and O.N. (S) convoys shall proceed to Londonderry instead of Iceland (see 15/12 A.and W.I.)

Enemy Air Operations.

Military Transport LOCHGARRY was unsuccessfully attacked 15 miles E. of Sydero at 1232.

Convoy F.N. 87 was attacked at 1800 off Hartlepool. S.S. CHARLES PARSONS is reported to have been slightly damaged.

Convoy E.N. 44 was attacked at 1744 in 57° 15' N. 1° 45' W; no damage is reported.

Convoy F.N. 87 was attacked at 1825, 18 miles E. by N. of Harwich, but was not damaged.

Mining.

Operation "Tincture". This operation was reported completed at 1728A today. Results were negative.

4 mines were detonated today off Spurn Point.

4 mines were detonated in the Thames Estuary early this morning. S.S. CORMEAD in F.N. 88 was mined at 2315, near 5 Buoy and sank later in tow. Enemy activity in the Estuary this evening was confined to the outer area, and no minelaying is suspected in the swept channels. An apparent premature mine explosion was seen about 1830 in the direction of Kentish Knock.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

Convoy W.S.14 (26 ships for Middle East) escorted by RAMILLIES, 4 destroyers and 1 sloop, left Freetown today.

Mediterranean.

9 Wellingtons attacked shipping at the Spanish Quay at Tripoli last night.

WARSAWA carrying troops was torpedoed this afternoon in 32° 10' N. 24° 32' E. and again this evening, and sank.

Security of Aden.

The Governor of Aden inquired yesterday whether he might assume that there is no present possibility of a Japanese attacking force of a brigade or more being transported to within 100 miles of Aden without being detected and brought to action, and, whether C. in C. E.I. will inform him at once if the situation deteriorates sufficiently to render such an operation possible, observing that the A.O.C. has insufficient aircraft to patrol the Gulf of Aden and the garrison has been so depleted that he doubts its ability effectually to resist a determined seaborne attack: the capture of Aden might paralyse our military effort in the Middle East. C. in C. E.I. replied that he cannot at this stage assess the scale of attack to which Aden will become liable; his views are that it is highly unlikely that the Japanese will attempt a landing in force near Aden in the immediate future, but that if such a landing were attempted it cannot be guaranteed that the force would be detected or brought to action before reaching its destination.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

East Indies.

There was an air raid on Rangoon today by a large number of bombers with fighter escort. No naval or military and little civilian damage is reported. Ten enemy bombers and 10 fighters are reported to have been shot down.

Rangoon town and Mingaldon aerodrome were raided today by 54 Japanese bombers escorted by 30 fighters. Comparatively little damage was done, and over 20 Japanese planes were shot down, but we lost 6 (4 in the air and 2 on the ground) and A.V.G. lost 2, so that air strength is much weakened, and C. in C. India considers that if the Japanese persist they will soon reduce our fighter strength to nil. Reinforcement of Burma by 2 fighter squadrons, he says, is vitally urgent.

China.

Hong Kong. At 0529Z today the Governor reported that street fighting was going on and the enemy were working towards the centre of the town. He had another request for surrender this morning, which he refused.
At 0751Z today the Governor reported that the military and naval commanders advised him that no further effective military resistance could be made, and he was taking action accordingly. All necessary naval demolitions were carried out.

Malaya. S/M K.17 left Singapore on 6/12 for operations in the Gulf of Siam and was ordered to return by 21/12. Nothing further is known of her movements and she must be considered lost.

N.E.I. The port of Surabaya is closed until further notice on account of mines.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

New Zealand.

U.S. destroyer DRAYTON claims to have sunk a Japanese S/M 60 miles south of Oahu (Hawaii) at 0140Z today.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1941
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

L.L. Trawlers for Yarmouth and Harwich.

Two L.L. Trawlers are to be sailed as soon as practicable from Harwich to Yarmouth to operate under F.O.i/c Yarmouth and two from Sheerness to Harwich to operate under F.O.I.C. Harwich.
(C. in C. Nore 1021A/25 to Cdre. Sheerness, F.O.i/c Harwich.)

Flag of C.S.18.

Flag of C.S.18 struck in EDINBURGH at 1600/25. R.A. Syfret and personal staff taking passage in KENT. Routine administration of 18th C.S. will be continued in EDINBURGH pending further instructions.
(EDINBURGH 1601/25 to Adty.)

S.S. FINN.

Swedish ship FINN sailed from Gotherburg without ship Navicert but is to be treated as if holding one. 2. Obtain copy of Manifest and send to D.E.W.D. Admiralty by quickest available route.
(D.E.W.D. 1659A/25 to N.O.i/c Faeroes.)

Co-operation with Russia.

9 Whalers for Murmansk.

Nine ex Norwegian whalers LL/SA fitted are to proceed in 3 groups to Murmansk.
2. 1st Group (3 ships) expected to be ready at Greenock by 7/1.
2nd Group (4 ships) at Greenock by 13/1
3rd Group (2 ships) at Greenock by 31/1
3. Vessels are capable of max. speed 10 knots have an endurance of about 1600 miles and carry 70 tons oil fuel.
4. C. in C. W.A. is requested to sail each group when ready to Seydisfiord to complete with oil fuel and A.C.I.C. is requested to sail them subsequently for Murmansk.
5. I suggest endurance permitting that whalers should accompany P.Q. convoys.
(D.O.D.(H) 1152A/25 to C. in C. W.A., A.C.I.C.)

Movements.

TARTAR.

Delayed by bad weather. (Weather Report) 4877, 2416 my position 064° 35' N. 009° 40' W.
(TARTAR 0934Z/25 to A.C.I.C.)

JONQUIL

C. in C. W.A. 2255A/24. Request JONQUIL may be sailed to Portsmouth for onward passage to Sheerness in first available C.E. Convoy.
(C. in C. Nore 1002A/25 to C. in C. Plymouth

/STURGEON ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

STURGEON. (1) Intend to sail STURGEON escorted by WHITE BEAR for Scapa at 1700A/27. Arrangements.
(Capt. (S) 3 1039A/25.)

BURZA
ST. ALBANS
ILLUSTRIOUS. Request you will sail BURZA and ST. ALBANS to escort ILLUSTRIOUS to Liverpool in accordance with N.O.I.C. Liverpool 1748/24 on completion of escort duty BURZA is to return to Clyde and ST. ALBANS is to enter harbour in order that C.O. may attend convoy conference on Dec. 30th.
(C. in C. W.A. 1059A/25 to N.O.I.C. Greenock, Capt (D) Londonderry.)

KENT with
Mr. Eden. Intend leaving anchorage Kola Inlet at 1630C/25 and pass through (route). S. of A. 20 knots, E.T.A. Clyde 1530A/29.
(KENT 1240C/25 to Adty., C. in C. H.F., N.O.I.C. Greenock.)
KENT's 1240C/25. KENT sailed Murmansk. Admty. pass to all addresses except Ad. Miles.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 1831C/25.)

VOLUNTEER. Detach VOLUNTEER at daylight tomorrow VOLUNTEER is to proceed to Clyde and comply with N.O.I.C. Greenock 1052/25.
(C. in C. W.A. 1609A/25 to VANQUISHER, VOLUNTEER.)

PHILOCTETES A.M.1936/23/9 PHILOCTETES is now allocated as destroyer depot ship in the Far East.
2. When ready C. in C. W.A. is requested to sail her for Durban. Speed of PHILOCTETES 13½ knots.
3. Final destination will be decided later.
(D.O.D.(F) 1735A/25) (P.D. 02041/41)

SULTAN HISAR
DEMIR HISAR Object of passage of destroyers SULTAN HISAR and DEMIR HISAR to Turkey via the Cape is their safe and timely arrival at their destination although it is anticipated that on certain portions of the route they will be employed as A/S escorts.
2. Any U-boat in a position to endanger either them or ships in company may be attacked. Enemy surface ships are to be reported and may be shadowed by day or night and attacked at night if favourable opportunity occurs.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1831A/25.)

GARLAND. Detach GARLAND at daylight tomorrow. GARLAND is to return to Greenock reporting convoy's and her own P.C. and S. when well clear.
(C. in C. W.A. 1834A/25 to CHITRAL, GARLAND.)

/U.S. Units ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1941
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements - contd.

U.S. Units.

U.S.S. ARKANSAS NASHVILLE and six destroyers CHATEA THIERRY and TARAZED sailed 1945.
(A.C.I.C. 2386/25.)

Operations.

Biscay S/M patrol.

OTWAY and H.33 leave Lizard Head at 1000A/25 diving by day OTWAY route J and H.33 by route H to lat. 047° N. thence OTWAY to position 28 and H.33 to position 25.
(N.O.I.C. Falmouth 0701A/25 to S/Ms on Patrol in Area A.)
Your 2031A/24, and my 1827A/24. OTWAY and H.33 escorted by Z.5 from Falmouth arrive 180° Lizard 5 miles at 0830 thence proceeding S.W. to patrol submerged by day. My 1827A/24. Delete para.D.
(F.O.S. 0839A/25 to Adty.)
My 1847A/25. Para.(E) Amend to read. O.10 escorted by CUTTY SARK leaves Milford Haven 0900A/26 for Wolf Rock. Thence dived by day to south westwards for patrol.
(F.O.S. 2229A/25 to Adty.)
At 0430A/26 intend to sail H.50 escorted by Z 5 from Falmouth to arrive position 180° Rame Head Chapel 2.2 miles at 0930A. S. of A. 9½ knots. Z 5 return arrangements.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1749A/25.)

Operation "Archer"

Covering force will remain at Scapa at short notice.
(C. in C. H.F. 1729A/25 to C.S.10, S.O. Force J.)
Scapa departures F.O.C.C.(10) in KENYA, ONSLOW, OFFA, ORIBI, CHIDDINGFOLD, PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE LEOPOLD. E.T.A. 1000/25 Sullom Voe.
(A.C.O.S. 2118A/24.)

British Air Operations.

Operation "Archer"

25/12 amend my 2041/24 for UMPIRE read TUNA.
(H.Q.C.C. 0211/25 to C.S.10.)

S.B.R.

Request S.B.R. in (a) area 73 East of 008° 30' W. and south of 049° 30' N. (b) area 76 East of 008° 30' W. and North of 045° 30' N. (c) area 56 West of 005° W. and North of 045° 30' N. from 0800/26th until further notice.
(F.O.(S) 1632A/25 to H.Q.C.C.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Operations.

Convoy E.C.

Enemy aircraft attacking convoy "Paddle" in 57° 15' N. 1° 45' W.
(JASON 1744/25.)
Fighters being sent to assistance of "Paddle".
(Rosyth W/T 1742/25.)

LOCHGARRY.

M. Transport LOCHGARRY proceeding to Thorshavn was attacked by 1 enemy aircraft 15 miles East of Sydero at 1232/25. Bombs fell wide. No damage or casualties.
(N.O.I.C. Faeroes 1840A/25.)

Mining.

S.S.EASTWOOD
S.S.MERCHANT
Tanker STANMOUNT.

Arrivals tugs KENIA and CHAMPION towing S.S. EASTWOOD escorted by A/S Trawler BASSET.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 0355A/25.)
Your 2307A/24, report position explosions took place.
(C. in C. Nore 0633A/25 to WHADDON, LEEDS.)
Your 0633. No.1 at 2200 in 052° 39' 30" N. 002° 00' 56" E. S.S. MERCHANT. No.2 in 052° 39' 22" N. 002° 00' 31" E. S.S. STANMOUNT. Both positions approx. for lat.
(WHADDON 0710A/25 to C. in C. Nore.)
Proceed and search for S.S. MERCHANT abandoned drifting south eastwards from 6 buoy. Tug in vicinity searching.
(C. in C. Nore 0807A/25 to WALPOLE.)
S.S. MERCHANT reported by A/C in 2° 04' 30" E. 52° 40' 00" N.
(F.O.I.C. Great Yarmouth 0907/25 to C. in C. Nore, C. in C. Nore 1017A/25 to WALPOLE.)
My 0915A. You will probably have to put boarding party on board. Proceed with all despatch.
(C. in C. Nore 0959/25 to WALPOLE.)
My 1017A/25. Tug reports MERCHANT not in position given. Another air search going out now.
(C. in C. Nore 1107A/25 to WALPOLE.)
Your 1110A/25. Carry thorough search E. and S.E. of No.6 buoy. If nothing is found order tugs to Yarmouth and proceed to Harwich yourself.
(C. in C. Nore 1157A/25 to WALPOLE.)
My 1212A/25 S.S. MERCHANT has not been located. Both MERCHANT and STANMOUNT now presumed sunk.
(C. in C. Nore 1444A/25.)
S.S. EASTWOOD in F.N.87 badly damaged by mine in 284 Aldeburgh L.F.2½ miles at 1800/24 has been towed into Harwich. Four of crew being landed at Humber, remainder at Harwich. At 2200/24 one mile north of 6 buoy S.S. STANMOUNT and MERCHANT also of F.N.87 mined and abandoned survivors being landed at Humber.
(C. in C. Nore 1212A/25 to Adty.)

/Ref. C.A.F.O. ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

S.S.EASTWOOD
S.S.MERCHANT
Tanker
STANMOUNT.
contd.

Ref. C.A.F.O. 1968/40. 1. 2216/24 (Approx) 2. STANMOUNT. 5. Approx. true North. 4 7/2 Knots. 7. None. Abandoned in above position (approx) 26 of crew out of a total of 41 landed at Grimsby by REBOUNDO p.m./25. H.M.S. WHADDON A 7216A/25 to C. in C. Nore only states 15 of crew retained on board, thus total crew is accounted for. C.B.S. were on the bridge in weighted boxes.
(F.O. Humber 1901A/25.)

Operation
"Tincture"

Your 1728A/22. Operation completed. Negative results.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1101/25 to Admty.)

Thames
Estuary.

4 mines presumed magnetic detonated by S.A. LL Trawlers. Positions.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1211A/25.)

Humber area.

Following Magnetic Mines exploded today by ROLLS ROYCE and HENRIETTA. (details)
(F.O. Humber 2052A/25.)

Navigational.

Wreck.

Wreck probably dangerous in approx. 020° one mile from No.6 buoy.
(C. in C. Nore 1425A/25 to WALLACE, Ships employed on East Coast convoy duties N.O.I.C. Yarmouth.)

Casualties and Defects.

HEARTSEASE

TRAIL'S 1730Z/24. You are to endeavour to make contact with EMPIRE MARLOW, TRAIL and FREEBOOTER and accompany them to Clyde.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 0019A/25 to SNOWDROP, TENACITY (R) TRAIL, FREEBOOTER, A.C.I.(C) C. in C. W.A. Admty (Rescue Tugs).)
CAROLINE MOLLER has made contact with HEARTSEASE, you should attempt to intercept them and render whatever assistance may be necessary.
(C.I.C. Greenock 0209/15 to RESTIVE.)
In tow by CAROLINE MOLLER estimated P.C. and S. at 02.00A 56° 21' N. 07° 33' W. 144° 4 knots. VERVAIN escorting.
(HEARTSEASE 0241A/25, F.O.I.C. Greenock 0355A/25.
Request instructions.
(CAROLINE MOLLER 0245 G.M.T./25 to C. in C. W.A.)
Immediate to ships. Return to Reykjavik. Congratulations on the successful outcome of your long vigil.
(C. in C. W.A. 0437A/25 to TRAIL.)
Your 0245/25 return to Clyde RESTIVE is also attempting to make contact with you.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 0553/25 to CAROLINE MOLLER.)

/Contact

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 25.12.1941. Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties and Defects.

HEARTSEASE contd.
Contact HEARTSEASE at 0800 a.m. (?a.m.) requested to stand by.
(RESTIVE 0825A/25.)
CAROLINE MOLLER no longer requires our assistance. Am proceeding Campbeltown.
(RESTIVE 1230/25.)
P.C. and S. at 1300A/25 112 Oversay Light 2.5 miles 135° 5 knots. CAROLINE MOLLER towing VERVAIN and RESTIVE in company.
(HEARTSEASE 1300A/25.)

SHEPPERTON FERRY.
Your 0518/9 and your 1329A/13. No news of SHEPPERTON FERRY. Admiralty pass to A.C.I.C.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel 0210C/25 to Admty.)

WANDERER
Captain (D)
Greenock 1820/23 reports :-
WANDERER has developed hull damage requiring docking as follows (details). Consider repairs should be effected before proceeding on escort duty in winter for which it is estimated four days will be required. Docking cannot be arranged at Glasgow without seriously interfering with existing programme. Ship required for escort 2/1/42.(ends.)
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 0110A/25 to Admty.)

TETCOTT.
WANDERER sailed in accordance with my 2254A/24. Delete all reference to TETCOTT who is delayed pending further examination of damage.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 1046A/25.)

0.9.
F.O.S. 1016A/24. 0.9 has returned to Milford Haven with defects.
(F.O.S. 1001A/25 to S/Ms area A.)

STORK.
Admiralty have arranged for STORK to dock at Devonport. STORK is to part company at 2000/25 and proceed to Plymouth. C. in C. Plymouth is requested to route STORK to Plymouth and forward numbers of survivors from STANLEY. AUDACITY and two M/Vs by signal as soon as received.
(C. in C. W.A. 1229A/25 to C. in C. Plymouth, STORK.)
C. in C. W.A. 1229/25. Route and arrangements.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1533/25, 0046/26.)
Reference C. in C. W.A. 1212. My P.C. and S. 50° 28' N. 09° 03' W. 114° 9 knots. Owing to damage have taken JONQUIL with me. My maximum safe speed 9 knots. D.G. out of action.
(STORK 2330A/25.)

/M.V. ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties and Defects - contd.

M.V. SHANTUNG (Swedish)

S O S SHANTUNG. 59° 50' N. 23° 30' W.
We have to abandon ship any moment.
(Liverpool W/T 1417/25.)
Class I Bearing 301°. S O S SHANTUNG 1450 G.M.T.
(Tiree 1501 G.M.T./25.)
Position 1500Z 060° 42' N. 019° 48' W. proceeding to assist SHANTUNG. Weather report 3855 4046.
(TRAIL 1515Z/25 to A.C.I.C. Repeated, C. in C. W.A. Newfoundland Force.)
Bearing from Port Patrick Radio 313° unreliable sector.
(Port Patrick Radio 1517/25 to Navy Charge, Greenock.)
If FREEBOOTER can tow EMPIRE MARLOW to U.K. SNOWDROP detach TENACITY to proceed forthwith to assist SHANTUNG on fire and abandoned in 59° 33' N. 20° 38' W. at 0230/25. NARCISSUS is standing by SHANTUNG. NARCISSUS established direct communication with TENACITY on 500 K/cs. SNOWDROP report action taken. NARCISSUS report whether SHANTUNG salvable.
(C. in C. W.A. 1607A/25 to SNOWDROP, NARCISSUS (R) F.O.I.C. Greenock, BOADICEA, TENACITY Admty., Rescue tugs.)
Not rebroadcast should this be done.
(Port Patrick Radio 1615/25 to Navy Charge, Greenock.)
1510/25 position 59° 50' N. 23° 15' W.
(Lyness W/T &c., T.O.R. 1623/25.)
1645/25. Fire is gaining ship must be abandoned any moment approx position 59 R.50 N.23 R.30 W.
(SHANTUNG 1650/25.)
Your 1607/25. TENACITY detailed forthwith to proceed to assist SHANTUNG. Orders issued for 853 or 500 K/cs. with NARCISSUS.
(SNOWDROP 1818A/25 to C. in C. W.A.)
Your 1606A/25th.* My position 2000Z 059° 50' N. 023° 30' W. have not located SHANTUNG intend sweeping back to 059° 33' N. 020° 38' W.
(NARCISSUS 2020Z/25 to C. in C. W.A.)*1607A/25 intended.
My 2020Z/25th. ELLIS reports SHANTUNG probably 30 miles West of my 2009 position a.m.(?a.m.) proceeding that direction ELLIS reports INGHAM proceeding to assist.
(NARCISSUS 2205Z/25 to C. in C. W.A.)

H.31.

F.O.S.2201A/24 not to C. in C. H.F. H.31 has not yet arrived nor has there been any news of her since parting company with her escort near Wolf Rock on 19/12 for patrol in Bay of Biscay. She has not replied to signals ordering her to report her position transmitted during the night of 24th/25th Dec. and if she does not arrive by 1200/27 she must be considered lost.
(F.O.S. 1837A/25.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys.

Q.P.4. 8 ships of Dvina portion of Q.P.4 are being gradually worked down mouth of River and Zero hour for breaking them over bar is now given as p.m./26. Westerly wind may make this extremely difficult and if likely to delay seriously propose to press for sailing of the 5 Molotovsk ships as soon as possible. EMPIRE STEVENSON berthing Ekonomia which Papanyn reports ready. Only SAINT CLEAR and CHUMLEIGH at Bakaritsa give cause for anxiety.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel 1000C/25 to Admty., C.S.18. S.B.N.O. North Russia. Repeated S.O.1st M/S F. C. in C. H.F., Ad. Miles.)

S.C.59 Missed LONDONDERRY while searching for 2 stragglers. Have contacted LEAMINGTON with S.C.59 who reports that he cannot get into touch with O.S.15. Have taken over S.C.59.
(KIRKELLA 1045A/25 to F.O.I.C. Liverpool.)

F.N.78. On mustering F.N.78 the following ships missing NEA with two survivors from EASTWOOD, unable to overtake convoy. HIGHWOOD suspected straggler. SHERWOOD is believed to have gone into Humber. Am retaining 15 survivors from STANMOUNT on board unable to transfer due to weather sea edging from N.N.W. progress slow.
(WHADDON 1215/25 to C. in C. Nore.)

H.X.165 Report situation.
(C. in C. W.A. 1215A/25 to BOADICEA.)

H.X.164. Average speed 7.9 knots. Convoy scattered by heavy gales 18/19th December, which continued to U.K. All ships arrived.
(D.T.D. 1250A/25.)

Vesca System Admty. 1710A/25. See Foreign Stations: General.

STAFFORDSHIRE My 1516/25. Amend to read:- F.N.87 20C Buoy 0200/26. WHADDON due 20C Buoy 2215 to take over escort of STAFFORDSHIRE and conduct back to your main convoy.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1828/25 to Admty., C. in C. Nore, General Rosyth South, Neg. N.Os i/c.)

MOST SECRET

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

General.

Vesca System, Extension.

Desired to extend operation of the Vesca system at ports abroad so that Intelligence Centres in receipt of Interstation Vescas promulgate the E.T.A. of merchant vessels to N.C.S.Os. or C.S.As. concerned. N.C.S.Os. and C.S.As. would liberate this information to M. of W.T. representatives, bona fide ships' agents, and local authorities in sufficient time before date of arrival, to comply with prevailing local requirements. When this system is working satisfactorily, it is intended to request shipowners and others to utilize Naval Control Service channels for obtaining information regarding movements of ships which it is necessary they should know. Request your remarks.
(A.C.N.S.(T), 1710A/25 to C's. in C. S.A., Med., E.F., E.I., A.W.I., etc.)

North Atlantic.

Air Attack on tanker.

As a result of British Air Attacks on a German Tanker in Ortugueira on 24/12, German aircraft may take retaliatory action in vicinity Gibraltar.
(V.C.N.S., 1151A/25 to F.O.C.N.A.)
A provisional report of attack by R.A.F. on a German Tanker in vicinity of Cape Ortegal is contained in F.O. tel. to H.M. Ambassador No. 1808.
(Hd. of M. 1924A/25 to N.A. Madrid.)

South Atlantic.

Convoy W.S.12Z.

Sailed 24/12 for Aden personnel on board ARANDA ORUNDA, NIEUW AMSTERDAM. E.T.A. 1300Z/14.
(S.S.T.O. Durban, 0640Z/25 to S.S.T.O. Aden.)

Troop transport.

Request early reply to my 1937Z/19.
(C. in C. S.A., 1024Z/25 to Admty.)
My 1937Z/19/12 para. 3. Request I may be informed of arrangements made as soon as possible.
(C. in C. S.A., 2045Z/25 to Admty.)

/FORT DE TROYON...

MOST SECRET

War Diary. 25.12.1941.
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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - Contd.

FORT DE TROYON. — Arrival 24th.
(N.C.S.O. Donala, ? Douala, 1037/25 to M. of W.T.)

American aircraft. — About (? 80) 4-engined American (? bomber) reinforcements for Middle East will be flying in one group of 3 daily from Brazil to Accra or elsewhere in West Africa starting now.
(C. in C. S.A., 1121Z/25 to DEVONSHIRE, CILICIA, CANTON.)

ROBERTS, EREBUS. — On arrival Cape area ROBERTS and EREBUS will require a period for boiler cleaning and making good defects.
(C. in C. S.A., 1057Z/25.)

Raider. — A.M. 1810/20. This vessel may be raider E, having been in Germany since May 1941. Photographs in raider supplement to W.I.R. number (? 64)* but No(t) Sampson decks forewell decks filled in. Recorded with 5.9 guns giving a broadside of 4. Torpedo tubes and aircraft but probably no mines. Ship often appears larger than she really is.
(C. in C. S.A., 1325Z/25 to S.A. Station.)
* 804 and 371 can also apply.

ASTER. — Your 1425N/4, addressed to ASTER. On what information are these orders based?
(A.C.N.S.(F), 2119A/25 to C. in C. S.A.)

Mediterranean.

SURCOUF. — Your 0057/14 and my 0801/15. Have not received your 2217/28/6 and 2103/1/11. No Officers or members of crew of SURCOUF are willing to serve.
(N.O.I.C. Aden, 0613Z/25 to Admty., (R) C. in C. Med.)

/Enemy ...

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Enemy Intelligence.

P.C. and S. of 2 enemy surface craft 300 100 33° 0' N. 12° 23' E. 290 3.
(Med. A/C, 0946/25.)
P.C. and S. of 1 small merchant vessel (enemy) is WAQP 56 39 120 - 6. (Position indecypherable)
(Med. A/C F, 0954/25.)

Haifa, PHENIX, VILJA.

Situation 0900/25. PHENIX (? taken to) middle of harbour burning (corrupt group) water line. Fire not dangerous at present. VILJA cargo and hull intact. Bridge living quarter and engine room burnt out. (? Harbour) closed, intensive emergency loading proceeding on other ships.
(N.O.I.C. Haifa, 1000C/25 to C. in C. Med.)
W.D. Note. Oiler PHENIX blew up in Haifa 24/12 and set fire to VILJA. See 2037/25.)

AJAX.

Transport AJAX hit by bomb superficial damage no casualties.
(D.S.T.O. Malta, 1040B/25.)

TRUANT, TRUSTY for Far East.

Admiralty 1729A/22. TRUANT returned to Alexandria 24/12 after 24 days patrol. TRUSTY was recalled after first day of patrol having sailed (? without the) power to operate side stops of 2 tubes defective. Defects now made good. Intend to sail S/Ms. for Port Said and onward passage, TRUSTY 1400/26, TRUANT 3/1. S.B.N.O. Suez Canal Area is requested to arrange transit canal and S.N.O. Red Sea for routeing to Aden.
(Capt. (S) 1, 1131B/25 to C. in C. Med.)

Italian main units.

Following is estimated disposition effective Italian main units on 25/12: Taranto 4 battleships one LITTORIO and 3 CONTE DI CAVOUR class. 2 8-inch cruisers, 5 6-inch cruisers. Special service: Taranto - Aegina one 6-inch cruiser.
(C.O.I.S. Alexandria, 1200B/25 to V.A. Malta, F.O.C.N.A., S.O. Force H, repeated C. in C. Med., Admty.)

Benghazi mined.

During 24/12 enemy dropped twelve mines on Benghazi one fell on mole remainder outside Harbour.
(C. in C. M.E., 1735/25.)
Benghazi was reoccupied early on 24/12. It was first taken by Army of the Nile on 6/2/1941 and evacuated on 3/4/1941.
(D.S., 842, 25/12.)

/Malta ...

MOST SECRET

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Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Malta air report.

24th. 3 Blenheims attacked bombs and machine guns large schooner Zuara Harbour probably damaged schooner below water line.
Shipping Spanish Quay. 1710 to 1953 hours 9 Wellingtons I.C. dropped 69 x 500 lb. G.P. bombs causing fire. Large explosions and scoring many hits quay. Other results unobserved. Smoke screen effective. 3 bombs dropped on 3 D/R's 1 cruiser 330° Tripoli 10 miles course 330° 25 knots. 1 stationary cruiser north West Tripoli 10 miles. Another stationary East Tripoli half mile. 2115 to 2159 hours 1 Albacore dropped 24 x 40 lb. Coopers bombs Tripoli diversions for 2 Albacores 4 Swordfish which laid 6 mines outside harbour. 0035 to 0235 hours 1 Wellington 1 C nuisance raid dropped 6 x 500 lb. G.P. 12 x 4 lb. incendiaries Tripoli tow results unobserved. 0746 1 schooner 1 minesweeper 280° Tripoli 40 miles course N.W. 3 knots 2 Blenheims attacked 1140.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1821/25.)
My 1821/25. Amend cruisers outside Tripoli to read destroyers.
(H.Q. Malta, 1025/26.)

Bardia.

Aircraft R/C R reported surface craft ships in Bardia Harbour at 1630 today 25th loading or unloading stores.
(N.L.O.(?30) Corps, 1920B/25 to C. in C. Med.)

THUNDERBOLT.

My 1745B/22nd. Establish patrol in area Q in addition to Q one.
(Capt. (S) 1, 1945B/25 to THUNDERBOLT.)

COZALLA.

Reported when COZALLA left Algiers 23rd she proceeded Bona.
(Tangier, 2015/25 to S.O.(I) Gibraltar.)

Situation Report 178.

Western Desert. HASTY and HOTSPUR sank German U-Boat at 1130/23 in 32° 15' N. 25° 19' E. and have returned Alexandria with 3 Officers and 40 ratings prisoners. HASTY, HOTSPUR were A/S striking force with Convoy of returning store ships from Tobruk which was later attacked by 2nd U-Boat, SHUNTIEN with 850 prisoners of war being torpedoed and sunk at 1900/23 in 32° 6' N. 24° 46' E. SALVIA collected large number survivors but has not answered signals since 2200/23 and is feared lost.

/2. H.M.Schooner...

MOST SECRET

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Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Situation Report 178. (Contd.)

2. H.M. Schooner TIBERIO capsized and sank 1310/23 off entrance Mersa Matruh Harbour. Crew rescued but one rating dead. Heavy weather has caused some damage to older merchant ships operating on coast resulting in supply delay.
3. Benghazi captured noon 24th. Town reported devastated and harbour mined. Naval advance party thought to have arrived.
4. Greek Schooner KETTY with enemy cargo arrived Tobruk 19th and taken in prize.
5. My 2004/22 para. 3. A/S search maintained in vicinity Alexandria 23rd, 24th, 25th without results, now withdrawn.
6. Haifa. Oiler PHENIX blew up in Haifa 24th and set fire to Oiler VILJA. PHENIX burnt out and settling VILJA upperworks burnt but fire under control and tanks not fired. Oil fire in harbour but most ships now clear.
7. Red Sea. Cased petrol carrier PORT FOUAD blew up at Gimsah anchorage night 23/24th, no details.
8. Aircraft. Aircraft reports one hit on submarine in 33° 32' N. 24° 58' E. at 1035/24. (C. in C. Med., 20373/25.)

Libya.

Cositrep No. 73.
5. 1315 hours 24/12 our arty. engaged vessel 75 ft. long at 526371, direct hits were scored and craft was beached and burnt out.
(C. in C. M.E., 2140/25.)

AURORA.

Damage. At least 6 weeks required in dock.
(A.S. Malta, 2230B/25.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

B.M.10. My 1121/23 last para. This force B.M.10 will now proceed to Singapore. In view of your 1804/23, date of sailing of B.M.10 will now be 8/1. Will escort be provided.
My 0746/17 to D. of S.T. Your 0810/23 to C. in C. E.F. para. H.B.M.(?11) will now be ready to sail about 14/1 not 8/1.
F.O.C.R.I.N., requested to pass to Arm. India.
(S.S.T.O. India, 0606Z/25 to C. in C. E.I.)

B.A.12. My 1125/19. As YOMA is further delayed owing to rudder repairs intend delaying sailing of all 3 ships 30/12. Can escort be provided on this date. (P.S.T.O. India, 0633Z/25 to C. in C. E.I.)

D.M.1. Convoy hitherto referred to as W.S.12 Z (?M) will now be called D.M.1.
(C. in C. E.I., 0800Z/25)
Amend my 1234/19 as follows.
(C. in C. E.I., 1154Z/25).

Threat to Aden. Personal for Governor. Your No. 13 T.O.O. 1012/24.
1. Difficult at this stage to give assessment of scale of attack to which Aden will become liable since this depends largely upon the rapidly changing situation in the Far East.
2. In existing circumstances my views are as follows:- Present preoccupations of the Japanese, and those of immediate future, are such that it is highly unlikely that they will attempt a landing in force in vicinity of Aden.
3. If such a landing were attempted it cannot be guaranteed that the Force would be detected or brought to action before reaching its destination.
4. Request you pass this and your No.13 T.O.O. 1012/24 to C. in C. Med., F.O.R.S. and N.O.I.C. Aden. (C. in C. E.I., 0812Z/25 to Govr. Aden)

W.S.14 D. It is under consideration that destination of W.S. 14 D in para 4 of my 0108/26/11, not to C. in C. Eastern Fleet, should be Malaya.
(D.O.D. (F), 1215A/25 to C. in C. E.I.)

CARTHAGE. Your 1810Z/23 not to S.O.W.P. CARTHAGE may be retained on Station until arrival of ALAUNIA, CHITRAL or WORCESTSHIRE which are E.T.R. Durban about 20/1.
(A.C.N.S. (F), 2133A/25 to C. in C. E.I.)

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Surabaya mining. The port of Surabaya is closed until further notice owing to presence of mines. (F.O. Malaya, 0143Z/25 to China Stn).

Situation report, 1630 G.M.T. /24. Trengganu. Now reported enemy troops arrived K. Trengganu 21/12 and have also reached Dungun. Pahang. Johore. Singapore. Christmas Island nothing to report.
Sarawak. Large enemy concentrations off Sadtfbong and landings being attempted. Fighting at Pending reported 0700 G.M.T./24.
N.E.I. Report submarine sunk three large Japanese transports and one oil tanker off Tanjong Po on 23/12. Kuching aerodrome denied and all denial schemes completed 24/12 reported that leading Malays have evacuated Kuching and Labour has disappeared.
Air. Japanese vessels sighted near Kuching were two cruisers one large destroyer eight transports one tanker exuding oil one sunken transport. Five Blenheim IV attacked 24/12 and reported one transport hit on stern six near misses. Other R/C reports nil.
Singkawang. Raided by 24 aircraft. Damage to aerodrome prevents loaded aircraft from taking off. Dutch moving aircraft to Palembang. (T.O.O. 0140). (G.O.C. Malaya 0411/25).

Tankers. Your 1848Z/24. Concur. (C. in C. E.F., 0513Z/25 to C. in C. E.I.)

Vichy ships sink-at-sight. Surface ships, submarines and aircraft in vicinity sink at sight any Vichy ships encountered in Gulf of Siam or China sea. (C. in C. E.F., 0515Z/25 to Eastern Theatre).

Hong Kong. For S. of S. from Governor, Hong Kong, 25/12. Street fighting is going on. Enemy working towards centre of town. I had another request for surrender this morning and answered briefly in negative. All in very good heart and send Christmas greetings. (N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0529Z/25 to Admty).
All S.Ps. and C.Bs. destroyed.
(N.O.I.C. Hong Kong 0643Z/25 to C. in C. E.F. (r) Admty).
Military and Naval Commanders have now advised me that no further effective military resistance can be made. I am taking action in accordance with that advice. Lord.
(Governor Hong Kong, 0731Z/25).
No.2 all necessary demolition carried out. Naval personnel performed their duty in an exemplary manner until ordered to lay down arms today 25/12. Lord. (Cdre. Hong Kong, 1045Z/25 to Admty).

/K.17...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - Contd.

K.17 Lost. Submarine K.17 left Singapore on 6/12 for operation in Gulf of Siam and was ordered to return by 21/12. Nothing further is known of her movements and I fear she must be considered lost. I am confident (corrupt group) that her exploits compare with those of O.16 and K.14. (C. in C. E.F., 0846Z/25 to C.Z.M. (R) Admty).

HOBART. C. in C. E.I. 1312Z/23 (N.T. in W.D.) I would be most grateful if HOBART could be spared to remain with this important convoy bringing reinforcements until its arrival at Singapore. In view of increased security to Darwin and North Australia provided by United States Naval Forces perhaps you could agree to HOBART remaining here until all immediate reinforcements have arrived. (C. in C. E.F., 0918Z/25 to A.C.N.B.)

MOUNT VERNON. W.O.59921 23/12. Opnav reports Navy Dept. has agreed to diversion of U.S.S. MOUNT VERNON to Singapore. Please issue necessary orders to her and inform Senior U.S. Naval Officer of Convoy our consent.
Inform Opnav probable time arrival Singapore ends. (D.O.D. (F), 1216A/25 to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I.)

Air R/C. 1030Z/25. No shipping off Kota Bharu or Pattani. Negative report Haadyai Junction - Singora poor visibility. Photo R/C Kuching 3 large transports 10 miles West of Tanjong Sipang at 1440 course 310°. 1 submerged transport 2 transports 1 destroyer 15 miles N.E. Tanjong Sipang 2 transports N.N.E. Tanjong Sipang course 260° 2 large barges, 1 submerged mouth of Kuching River no activity Kuching River. 7 enemy aircraft bombed Sibu at 1470 (or 1460 corrupt) details not available. (Air H.Q., F.E., 1705/25).

Reinforcements. 60301 25/12. Following from Chiefs of Staff. No. C.O.S. India 13. U.S. authorities agree to MOUNT VERNON proceeding direct to Malaya. We therefore confirm that alternative (a) of W.O. tel. 59407 of 20/12 is to be adopted. (W.O.1900/25, to C. in C. F.E., C. in C. India).

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. - contd.

Prohibited area.

Java Eastern portion Madura Strait charts now 65 3C and 941B.
(1) The area bounded by the following positions declared prohibited area for shipping.
(a) From position 07° 19' 15" S., 113° 54' 45" E. to (b) 07° 13' 00" S., 114° 02' 20" E., to (c).
(R.A. Malaya, No. T.O.O./25).

America & West Indies.

S.S. CLUMBERHALL.

St. John's N.F. 24/12 arrivals PRUDENT with S.S. CLUMBERHALL in tow. (F.O.N.F., 0124Z/25).

SOREL.

My 1501Z/24 for S.C.61 read S.C.62.
(C.C.N.F., 0415Z/25).

Vichy French Units and Shipping.

Algiers. 22/12 B.2. FANTASQUE and 4 sloops left Oran during night of 17/18 December. DJEBEL NADOR is reported loading rubber at Oran.
(B.A.D., 1039R/25).

Dispositions.

Your 1919/15. C.N.O. has expressed appreciation he is instructing C. in C. U.S. Atlantic Fleet to arrange details direct with C. in C. A.W.I. C.N.O. assumes these forces may also be operated as part Com Task Force 2 should this prove desirable. (B.A.D. Washington, 1041R/25 to Admty)

Free French at St. Pierre.

Admiral Muselier reports (as 1910Z/24)
2. Please inform H.M. Ambassador urgently. This action has come as a complete surprise to us.
(V.C.N.S., 1131A/25 to B.A.D.)

Situation Report.

(1) Phillipine Isles 24/12. Very heavy fighting reported on both N. and S. fronts. Enemy continue to land reinforcements. Consideration is being given by military authorities to declare Manila an open city.
(2) U.S. Pacific coast. A. U.S. army bomber claims to have successfully attacked a Japanese S/M 50 miles off Columbia river 24/12 S/M which was submerged, was brought to surface by 2 bombs close astern. A third bomb fell close alongside which caused a sharp explosion followed by an oil patch and miscellaneous debris on surface which received a further bomb from aircraft. Admiralty pass to W.O. and A.M.
(Joint Staff Mission Washington 1147R/25)

/QUEEN...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 25.12.1941. Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. - Contd.

QUEEN OF BERMUDA. B.A.R.M. Washington's 1032/23. Admty have no objection to QUEEN OF BERMUDA proceeding Halifax to embark passengers after her work up at Bermuda. C.in C. A.W.I. is requested to sail ship accordingly.
2. After passengers have been embarked at Halifax QUEEN OF BERMUDA should be sailed independently for U.K. (D.O.D. (F), 1326A/25).

Canadian escorts for S.C. and ON.(S) convoys. Ref. A.M.2309/15 and C.C.N.F.1913/15 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa not to Admty.
U.S. C.N.O. agrees as a temporary measure Canadian escorts proceed Londonderry instead of Iceland. (c) Provided (a) long endurance British escort ships thus released are made available for Canadian Ocean escorts and for escort units of H.X. and O.N. route convoys which may be directed to proceed Londonderry.
(b) Iceland shipping not to be routed via U.K. but sailed direct from U.S.A. to Iceland with suitable frequency (c) Operational and administrative control of escort units to remain unchanged.
(2) Proviso modification is not understood by B.A.D. Washington and elucidation is being sought. U.S.C.N.O. is understood to have communicated with Spenavo on this point (iii) U.S.C.N.O. hopes to be ready to discuss very shortly proposals in A.M.1119/6 (N.T. in W.D.) (B.A.D., 1651R/25).

Coastal routeing. Opnav reports orders for coastal routeing so far issued cover only U.S. Flag and U.S. controlled vessels. Others may accept such routeing if they so desire 2145Z/24 ends.
(D.T.D., 1713A/25 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

U.S. Dispositions. Modify my 2217/17. Ships mentioned less U.S. Aircraft carrier WASP depart Hampton Roads 1600Z/26 arrive Casco 28th.
(U.S.C.N.O., 2115/25 to Admty etc).

S/M SURCOUF. Request you will sail SURCOUF as soon as she is released from her present employment to Tahiti via Bermuda and Panama Canal.
2. On arrival she will come under orders of C. in C. E.F.
(A.C.N.S. (F), 2121A/25 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand.

Flag of F.O.C.

Flag of F.O.C. Australian Squadron transferred 24/12 to AUSTRALIA.
(A.C.N.B., 02542/25).

Convoy for Singapore AQUITANIA.

C. in C. E.F. 0513Z/19.
(i) I intend to sail a convoy, containing warlike stores, including M.T. of a (?full) Battalion from Melbourne for Singapore, on 31/12. Escort KANIMBLA and HOBART as soon as available.
(ii) C. in C. E.I. will state when and where HOBART will be released from present duties.
(iii) AQUITANIA with 3500 troops and 50 R.A.A.F. personnel embarked, and escorted by an 8 inch cruiser, will sail from Sydney for Singapore about 7/1.
(iv) It is considered escort of AQUITANIA should be more than one 8 inch cruiser. Request consideration be given to reinforcing this escort from Far Eastern Fleet.
(v) Both the (?convoy) and AQUITANIA should arrive Singapore about 20/1.
(A.C.N.B., 0635Z/25 to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I

NEPTUNE.

May next of kin now be informed observing this discloses loss of ship.
(N.Z.N.B. 1226M/25 to Admty).
Your 1226M/25. Next of kin should be informed by telegram not mentioning name of ship or circumstances. Casualties are to be treated as missing.
It is probable that an announcement of the loss of the ship will have to be made within the next few days.
(2nd S.L., 1601A/25 to N.Z.N.B.)

Mines.

W.M.15. Floating Mines reported in 034° 50' S., 164° 58' E., at 0246 GMT/23. Stone colour with red band. (N.Z.N.B., 1912M/25 to Admty, W.M. Addressees).

Timor.

My 1104Z/23. Portuguese Govt. now amenable to presence of Dutch and Australian troops in Portuguese Timor. 3 Enemy aircraft sighted over Nissan Island (New Guinea).
(A.C.N.B., 1941Z/25 to Admty etc).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12. 1941.
Thursday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

SAGADAHOC (torpedoed 3/12) — Survivors from SAGADAHOC landed Trinidad in care of U.S. Authorities from S.S. (?BE)RING yesterday. Report leaving New York 7/11 bound Port Elizabeth. On 29/11 received instructions U.S. Navy code proceed Durban. On 2/12 picked up message from CLAN MACBEAK distant from her E.S.E. 200 miles that she had seen track of torpedo. Ship was steering 123°. On 3/12 at 2010 she was torpedoed by large S/M with high bow and guns fore and aft in 021° 50' S. 007° 50' W. Local U.S. Navy Authorities express doubt as to security of naval code.
(N.O.I.C. Trinidad 1721Q/25 to Admty.)

Submarines Reported.

1403/24. — Barranquilla reports submarine nationality unknown. Speed estimated 15 knots course 215° cruising on surface sighted 1403/24th 011 30 N. 076 11 W. at altitude 1000 feet by pilot of clipper. Check requested on position. (S.O. (I) Jamaica 0016R/25).
There were 3 U.S. S/M's in that Area at the time steering approx. 215°. (B.A.D. 1549R/25).

0952. — Italian S/M bearing 289°/1 at 0952 G.M.T. (Malta 1156B/25).

1240. — Position course and speed of Submarine 35° 20' N. 21° 5' E. 270 6. (A/C K 1240/25, N.O.I.C. Malta 1359B/25 to S/Ms on Patrol).

Estimated approx. positions of U/Bs.
(D.D.I.C. 1401A/25, 1402/25).

Submarines Attacked.

My 1240 have attacked enemy submarine with bombs dive and estimate no hits. Submarine did not submerge. (A/C 203 R 1250/25).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation "Archer". Force P. C.S.10 left Sullom Voe at 1617A in KENYA with ONSLOW, OFFA, ORIBI, CHIDDINGFOLD, PRINCE CHARLES and PRINCE LEOPOLD. This is D.1 of the operation.

Patrol "White". At 1442A today C. in C. H.F. instructed C.S.1 to establish Patrol "White" with one cruiser and 2 corvettes, to intercept enemy surface vessels breaking in.

Operation "Anklet". S.O. Force J. reports all assaults carried out according to plan. A patrol Trawler was sunk off Tranoy. The force is oiling in Skjelfiord.

Enemy Air Operations.

S.S. CHARLES PARSONS was bombed and damaged in Tees Bay last night and was towed into Hartlepool.

Mining.

Two ground mines were detonated off the Tyne and several magnetic mines in the war channel off Yarmouth today.

M/S Trawler HENRIETTE was sunk by an acoustic mine off Spurn Point at 1244 today.

North Atlantic.

3 French merchantmen escorted by an armed trawler were reported to have entered Melilla from westward at 2300 today.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

There were several attacks on Malta last night by enemy aircraft, the most important one being on Luqa this morning where several of our aircraft were damaged or destroyed.

Operation M.F.1.

CARLISLE, NAPIER (D7, S.O), NIZAM, KINGSTON and ISAAC SWEERS sailed from Alexandria today to bring in Convoy M.E.8 from Malta. This is D.1 of the operation. C.S.7 in AJAX, with DIDO and 6 destroyers left Malta at 1930/26 escorting the Convoy.

Albacores and Swordfish laid mines last night and again about 1950 today outside Tripoli harbour. Wellingtons made successful attacks on shipping in Tripoli harbour from 1718 to 2020 today. At 1730 today 2 Blenheims attacked 2 1500 ton merchant ships at Zuara; a direct hit caused one of the ships to blow up with a very heavy explosion which may have damaged the mole.

East Indies and China.

Until it becomes possible to reform a strong Eastern Fleet, REVENGE, ROYAL SOVEREIGN and other R class battleships as they arrive in East Indies may be employed on convoy escort work west of the Malay barrier.
The following ships, in addition to REVENGE and ROYAL SOVEREIGN, are to be regarded as forming part of the Eastern Fleet :- DANAE, DURBAN, DRAGON, JUPITER, VAMPIRE, ENCOUNTER, ELECTRA, EXPRESS.

China.

Malaya.

Reinforcements for Singapore already arranged sail as follows:- From Bombay 8/1, 14/1, 21/1, 22/1. From Durban 24/12. From Calcutta about 29/12. From Melbourne 31/12. AQUITANIA from Sydney 7/1.

A naval patrol vessel sank 3 small craft manned by the enemy in the vicinity of Pangkor Island today.

/Philippines ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

China - contd.

Philippines. Manila has been declared an open city.
Admiral Hart has left Manila to join the U.S. naval forces in the South. Admiral Haswell is now in command of the U.S. naval force with his H.Q. on Corregidor.
Recent reports from the U.S. S/Ms of the Asiatic Fleet claim one transport and one minesweeper sunk, one transport probably sunk, one seaplane tender possibly sunk.

N.E.I. Port Montrose (Surabaya) was closed at 0700Z owing to mines.

C. in C. Netherlands, reports that the Dutch S/M K.14 has sunk 3 large transports and a tanker off the Sarawak coast.

6 N.E.I. Dorniers were destroyed in a Japanese air attack on Lake Tondang today.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 26.12.1941. Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

TRUSTY, TRUANT. — It has been decided to sail TRUSTY and TRUANT shortly from the Mediterranean to join the Eastern Fleet. (F.O.S., 1139A/26 to COLOMBIA).

State of war exists with Bulgaria as from 13/12. (Head of M., 1350A/26) (A Message 962A).

M/S Groups 143 and 146. — Request you will sail M/S Group 143 to North Shields and M/S Group 146 consisting of CONGRE, FLYING WING, PORTIA, and ROTHERSLADE to Yarmouth. (A.C.N.S. H., 1359A/26).

LA MOQUEUSE. — My 2205A/23. As REINE DES FLOTS is delayed, LA MOQUEUSE may be employed in Irish Sea Escort Force till further notice. (C. in C. W.A., 2347A/26).

Movements.

H.50. — My 1749A/25. Sailed H.50 escorted by Z.5. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 0431A/26 to C. in C. Plymouth).

JONQUIL. — Unless JONQUIL has Survivors on board or needs fuel she is to be detached to Portsmouth at seaward end of Q.Z.S.278.
2. Route for JONQUIL.
3. Speed to be adjusted to arrive Needles at 0815/27. (C. in C. Plymouth, 1052/26 to STORK, JONQUIL)

STORK. — E.T.A. midnight. Have 5 officers and 35 men survivors. This includes 3 and 10 mercantile also 3 prisoners. (STORK, 1330/26 to C. in C. Plymouth).
My 1533/25. Amend position A to 180° Bishop Rock 5. (C. in C. Plymouth, 0046/26 to STORK).

VERONICA. — My 1135A/24. Request VERONICA be ordered to Londonderry before proceeding to Newport. (C. in C. W.A., 1501A/26 to A.C.I.C.)

WHADDON. — On relief by Destroyers from W.A. Command proceed to Invergordon and fuel.
2. You are required for Special escort Duty to Lerwick as ordered by N.O.I.C. Invergordon, returning to Invergordon as ordered by N.O.I.C. Lerwick. 3. On return to Invergordon proceed to Rosyth. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1539/26 to WHADDON)

/TRAIL...

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. - Contd.

TRAIL. TRAIL's 1515Z/25. Request she may be ordered to return to St. Johns N.F. as soon as you can arrange for a vessel to stand by SHANTUNG TRAIL urgently required to rejoin proper task unit. (C.C.N.F., 1556Z/26 to A.C.I.C.)

BARFORD, BARCLOSE, BARFOAM. N.O.I.C. Londonderry's 1600A/15. Anticipate sailing these vessels A.M./28. Calling Horta, Fayal. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1601/26)

BLENHEIM. Can probable date of arrival of BLENHEIM at Hvalfjord be given.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland, 1632N/26 to Admty).

O.21. On return of CUTTY SARK request you will sail O.21 to Clyde for onward passage to Dundee as arranged by S.3. (F.O.S. 1757A/26 to F.O.I.C. Milford Haven).

WHITEHAVEN. At 0700/27 intend sailing WHITEHAVEN for Port Edgar fuelling port Z.A. en route.
(WESTERN ISLES, 1913A/26).

Operations.

Biscay S/M Patrol. My 1701/25. Sailed H.34 and JUNON escorted by BREDA at 0015/26. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 0016/26).
Sailed CUTTY SARK and 010 in accordance with F.O.(S) 1327A/24. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1013A/26).
In the event of breakdown S/Ms in Bay of Biscay Area are to return to Falmouth keeping as clear as possible of other S/M positions and routes.
An E.T.A. should be made about 15 hours before arrival off Lizard Head if possible.
(F.O.S., 1053A/26 to S/Ms Area A).
After passing Wolf Rock at about 0400A/27 proceed by route C thence position 24.
(F.O.S. 2319A/26 to O.10).

Iceland cable. Request cable ship may be sent at earliest opportunity to repair number one I/L.
(A/S F.D. Seidisfiord 1145N/26 to D.A/S.W.)

East Coast Patrol. Departure M.Ls. 191 and 189 on patrol.
(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft, 1346A/26).

Denmark Straits Patrol. Request you establish patrol "White" with one cruiser and 2 corvettes. Object to intercept enemy surface vessels breaking in.
(C. in C. H.F., 1442A/26 to C.S.1)

/C. in C...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Denmark Straits Patrol-Contd.

C. in C. H.F.1442/26.
A. Intend to proceed in NORFOLK at 1900N for patrol "White". VERONICA and SWEETBRIAR sail from Reykjavik 2300N. S.O.P.A. informed.
B. Unless otherwise ordered BERWICK is to sail P.M.Wednesday 02764 to relieve NORFOLK a.m./1. (C.S.1., 1734N/26).

Operation "Archery".

Sullom Voe departures C.S.10 in KENYA, ONSLOW, OFFA, ORIBI, CHIDDINGFOLD, PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE LEOPOLD.
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 1617A/26).
Force "P" sailed operation "Archery".
(C.S.10 1601A/26 to C. in C. H.F., A.C.O.S.)

Operation "Anklet".

All assaults carried out according to plan Patrol trawler sunk off Tranoy. Force oiling in Skjelfiord. Some enemy aircraft R/C.
(S.O. Force J., 1621A/26 to Admty).

Enemy Air Activity.

CHARLES PARSONS. (British, 1554 tons) damaged.

CHARLES PARSONS attacked by A/C in position approx 8 miles North of Hartlepool at 1750/25. Damaged by near miss. Ship towed into Hartlepool. 2 men injured. (N.O.I.C. Hartlepool, 1045/26)
Early this morning pumped out vessel with salvage tug. T.H.TILLY now tightening leak from ballast tank into No. 2 Hold. Will remain in attendance until all in order. (Smith 1110/26 to Admty).

Convoy "Ocean."

Fighters are being despatched to assist Convoy Ocean. (Rosyth, 1606/26)

Mining.

Convoy F.N.88. CORMEAD (British, 2848 tons) sunk.

Departure at 0045A Tug SUPERMAN to assist vessel in distress 350° No. 5 buoy 3 miles.
(F.O.I.C. Yarmouth, 0047A/26).
Have CORMEAD in tow. Engine room which is aft is flooded. Midship watertight bulkhead holding.
(WIDGEON, 0933A/26)
Departure tug ERSION at 0905 and salvage tug NESSUS at 0930 to assist CORMEAD.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 0949A/26).
CORMEAD in F.N.88 mined at about 2315/25 3 miles 350° from 5 buoy. Engine room and after hold flooded. Now in tow of WIDGEON and tugs proceedin to Yarmouth where it is hoped to beach vessel.
8 of crew in WIDGEON, 17 in MEYNELL.
(C. in C. Nore, 1150A/26).

/CORMEAD...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 26.12.1941.
Firday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Convoy F.N.88. CORMEAD (British, 2848 tons) sunk. - Contd.

CORMEAD foundered and sank in approx. 052° 24' 36" N., 002° 13' 30" E. 8 Survivors will be landed Yarmouth. Remainder on board MEYNELL. (WIDGEON, 1152A/26).
17 of crew including 4 D.E.M.S. ratings landed today at Grimsby from NEYNELL. The remainder of crew (7) including the Master and Deck Officers are aboard WIDGEON. (F.O. Humber, 1545A/26).

WELSHMAN, MANXMAN.

If it is intended to continue to operate the fast minelayers in Biscay area during dark periods it is requested that operations may be carried out from Milford Haven (which means sailing for operations only two and a half hours earlier than from Plymouth). This will ensure that C.Bs. can be recovered without delay on completion of offensive operation and will allow ships to lie in shelter while awaiting the first operation.
2. It is requested that WELSHMAN may proceed to Plymouth for 48 hours alongside in Dockyard at conclusion of next dark period to make good various minor defects including type 28 and repair to mine rails.
(R.A.M., 1033/26 to Admty).

EASTWOOD (Mined, 24/12).

One of crew of EASTWOOD landed at Grimsby from Norwegian Steamer NEA. Jones Harrington A.B. states ship mined off Aldeburgh 1750/24. 7 or 8 men got away in his boat which capsized. He was picked up after nearly one hour in the water. Nothing known of the others. (F.O. Humber, 1047A/26).

Thames Estuary.

One magnetic mine detonated at 1828/25. Details. (Capt. M/S Sheerness 1106A/26).
There was some enemy activity in the Thames Estuary between 1805 and 1900/25 but this was confined to the outer area, and no minelaying is suspected in the swept channels.
About 1830 an explosion which appeared to be a premature mine was observed in the direction of Kentish Knock.
(S.O. T.L.D.F., 1402/26).
One S.A. Mine detonated at 1200/26. Details. (Capt. M/S Sheerness 1932/26).

N.L.52.

Intend to carry out Operation N.L.52 tonight. (V.A. Dover 1321A/26).

/Yarmouth...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. - Contd.

Yarmouth.

LL Sweepers detonated 1 red magnetic mine at 1325A. (Details) (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1424A/26)
LL Sweepers detonated 1 blue magnetic mine at 1415A. (Details) (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1459A/26)
Sweeper detonated 1 red magnetic mine at 1547A. Details. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1626A/26).
LL Sweepers detonated 1 red magnetic mine at 1610A. Details. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1755A/26)

HENRIETTE (M/S Trawler) sunk.

HENRIETTE damaged by a mine and sunk while in tow of H.M.T. ROLLS ROYCE in approx. position South of H.9 Buoy. No casualties.
(F.O. Humber, 1502A/26).
Acoustic mine exploded 1124/26 sinking HENRIETTE in 134½° Spurn Point 3.4 miles.
(F.O. Humber, 1955A/26).

Tyne.

Detonated one Blue Magnetic 1030/26 and one Acoustic 1210/26. Details.
(N.O.I.C. North Shields 1508/26).

Humber. (TYPHOON)

Owing to shortage of LL trawlers and loss of one today request every endeavour may be made to speed up completion of TYPHOON.
(F.O.I.C. Humber, 1843A/26 to F.O.I.C. London).

Enemy Intelligence.

Brest.

My 2037A/23. Photographic R/C of Brest at 1330A/26 shows no change.
(D.D.I.C., 1949A/26)

Navigational.

8B Buoy.

8B Buoy is extinguished.
(WALLACE 0955A/26) (C. in C. Nore, 1115A/26).

36 Buoy.

Number 36 Buoy reported about 1½ miles S.E. of position and flashing irregularly by HORNPIPE at 0735/26. (A.C.O.S., 1505/26).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

SHANTUNG (casualty 25/12).

Position 59° 50' N., 23° 30' W., only approx. Ship must be abandoned any moment.
(SHANTUNG, 0044/26).
SHANTUNG (not yet?) located. Request air co-operation daylight. (NARCISSUS, 0140Z/26).
NARCISSUS 0140Z/26. Weather unsuitable for air search from Iceland today.
(A.C.I.C. 0720N/26).
Position 059° 40' N., 020° 20' W. In company NARCISSUS searching for SHANTUNG on information received from Swedish ship who has survivors of SHANTUNG aboard.
(TENACITY, 1300Z/26).
Contacted Swedish Freighter TUNAHOLM. Freighter SHANTUNG's crew picked up by her. SHANTUNG possibly still afloat in 059° 47' N., 021° 35' W.
(TRAIL, 1355Z/26 to A.C.I.C.)
Met COLOMBIA at 1030Z/26th in reliable position 059° 30' N., 021° 25' W. She had picked up survivors from SHANTUNG, 5 have been lost.
COLOMBIA reported SHANTUNG bearing approx. 080° 50 miles Carlingford steering 080° for 60 miles. No trace of ship. Intend sweeping N.E. and S.E. of present position throughout night. TENACITY in company. (NARCISSUS, 1635Z/26)

HEARTSEASE (collision 23/12).

Remain with HEARTSEASE until permission is granted to proceed up Harbour.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 0335A/26 to CAROLINE MOLLER).
Following from CAROLINE MOLLER to F.O.I.C.Greenock.
078°, 5 miles from Holy Island.
HEARTSEASE very difficult on short rope.
Cancel E.T.A. Will contact TOWARD by visual signalling as soon as possible.
(Port Patrick Radio, 0715/26).
Arrived HEARTSEASE with collision damage in tow of CAROLINE MOLLER escorted by VERVAIN.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1145A/26).
HEARTSEASE berthed Gourock 1940.
(CAROLINE MOLLER, 1959A/26).

Convoy O.N.50.
DELFSHAVEN (Dutch, 5281 tons).

DELFSHAVEN returned to Belfast Lough from O.N. 50 having been in collision off Corsewall Point. Agents attending.
(N.C.S.O. Belfast, 1245A/26).

STOKE CITY.

Intend sailing STOKE CITY towed by ST. OLAVES escorted by CAPE PORTLAND to Kirkwall at 1600 tomorrow weather permitting.
Request air escort accordingly.
(N.O.I.C. Faeroes, 1845A/26 to A.C.O.S.)

/Convoy...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects. - Contd.

Convoy F.S.82.
EMPIRE LOUGH.

EMPIRE LOUGH of F.S. No. 82 reports making water after hold. Pump unable to control. Can make Yarmouth with assistance of salvage tug.
(WIDGEON, 2220A/26).
Your 2220A/26. Tug, KROOMAN with Salvage Officer and portable pump proceeding as soon as possible to your assistance.
(C. in C. Nore, 2331A/26 to WIDGEON).

H.31.

Report P.C.S. Return to Falmouth by route B to 49° N., thence to R/V in position 180° Lizard 5 miles. (F.O.S., 2301A/26 to H.31)
With reference to aircraft report of a submerged S/M in 48° 27' N., 07° 58' W., at 1659/26, course 037° request aircraft may search from this position Northwards along route B as far as 49° N., thence towards Falmouth from daylight 27th. (F.O.S., 2337A/26 to C. in C. Plymouth).
My 1837A/26. A/C reports having sighted submerged S/M in position 48° 27' N., 07° 58' W., course 037°, at 1659A/26, leaving trail of oil and bubbles. This may be H.31.
(F.O.S., 2338A/26).

Shipping & Convoys.

H.X.164.

Warmest Congratulations. All the ships of your convoy H.X.164 have now arrived safely.
(C. in C. W.A., 1008/26 to Rear-Admiral B.W. Barrow).

STAFFORDSHIRE.

Detach WHADDON to escort STAFFORDSHIRE to Rosyth at best speed. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1028/26 to LEEDS).

H.G.76.

My 2255A/24 para.2. In view of STORKS 2330A/25 and possibility of air attack during moonlight, DEPTFORD is to act as additional escort for Bristol Channel ships until moonset tomorrow, then return to Liverpool.
(C. in C. W.A., 1044A/26).

Q.P.

Conditions favourable today and ships from Doina and Molotovsk are now being broken out.
In order to take full advantage of this opportunity I have had to agree to leave EMPIRE METEOR at Batharitsa. Convoy will now consist of (?WANSTEAD) (CDRE) TREKIEVE, CAPE CORSA, CAPE RACE, EL CAPITAN COCKLE, DANYBRYN from Doina, SAN AMBROSIO, BRIARWOOD, TREHATA, ELONA, SUKH one from Molotovsk STALINGRAD not joining from Iokanka. ARCOS doubtful starter. (S.B.N.O. Archangel, 1215C/26)

/Request...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

Q.P.4. Contd.

Request information if Q.P.4 has sailed and if so how many ships. (N.O.I.C. Iceland, 1343N/26 to Admty).
S.B.N.O. North Russia's 2131C/25 and my 1215C/26. Westerly winds have made it impossible to clear DVINA ship without prolonged delay. Panamanian COCKLE however is now beyond bar. MOLOTOVSK portion of 5 ships is clear. Intend sailing this portion and COCKLE p.m./27 for R/V off Panoior Terski Orlov according to position of ice edge. Probable E.T.A. R/V a.m./29. Russians have promised remaining 6 ships of DVINA portion will be unloaded at Docks weather conditions permitting. I intend sailing these ships to await convoy for anchorage in Kola Inlet which Admiral Golovkov asked to decide upon. Meantime these ships will have safe anchorage in static ice. ARCOSAD non started from Iokanka.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 2230C/26).

P.Q.7.

Owing to continuous defects in M/Vs only 2 have sailed at 1330 today with HUGH WALPOLE and OPHELIA. (A.C.I.C., 1511N/26 to Admty).
2 ships only sailed 1330/26, local escort HUGH WALPOLE, OPHELIA. Remaining ships delayed by defects.
2. CUMBERLAND is to sail SALAMANDER and BRITOMART to relieve local escort in accordance with my 0838A/17. Remainder ocean escort is to remain at Seidis Fiord until further orders.
(C. in C. H.F., 2215A/26 to CUMBERLAND, A.C.I.C.)

O.N. and O.S. convoys.

Commodores are to be informed that ships bound for West Indies and South American ports should not be detached from O.N. or O.S. convoys until instructions are received from Admiralty Opnav or C. in C. W.A. Provisional Dispersal Point in Convoy Routeing Signal is merely for convenience of laying off dispersal routes.
(D.T.D., 1626A/26 to N.C.S.O. Mersey).

9

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

P.39. S/M P.39 escorted by WHITEHALL from position 359° Spartel 5 at 0830/26, speed 8 knots, to Gibraltar.
(F.O.C.N.A. 0217A/26 to Ships on Patrol Gibraltar Force, Group 4, WHITEHALL.)
Arrival P.39.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1122A/26.)

German Threat to Tunisia, Spain and Morocco. Following received via Tangier from U.S. Consul Tunis. Indications of German concentration in Southern Italy and (corrupt group) and that these may be directed against Tunisia. Understood that Gen. Delaitre intends to resist unless positively ordered by Petain to submit. French Forces not more than 20,000 badly armed and almost without aviation, troops including Officers ordered to remain in Barracks tonight. Concentrations of troops are officially reported on French Spanish Border and in Spanish Morocco. Supposition here does not exclude joint action with Spanish.
24/12. No confirmation here of troop concentrations in Spanish Morocco. T.O.O. 1705/25 Ends.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1016A/26 to C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta)
N.I.D. Comment. W.O. consider that whilst there are no actual troop concentrations in Southern Italy, this may refer to movements south mainly of Air Personnel.
(ii) Statement re French Forces in Tunisia is approximately correct.
(iii) Statements as to troop concentrations on Franco-Spanish border and in Spanish Morocco are not correct.
(iv) Taken as a whole this report repeats previous stories, being circulated as part of the war of nerves, and the general situation remains as outlined in Admiralty 1141A/24/12, which gives summary of J.I.C. Report on possible Axis developments in French North Africa and Spain.
(C. in C. Med. and V.A. Malta are addressees.)

P.35. My 1038A/22, not to Admiralty and F.O.S. Intend to sail P.35 p.m./27 for Malta. P.35 will pass through 038° 20' 009° 00' E. about 0300A/29 thence as ordered by V.A. Malta. C. in C. Med. pass to Capt. S.1., V.A. Malta pass to Capt. S.10.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1136A/26 to C. in C. Med.)

MIRROR, cable repairs. MIRROR escorted by COLTSFOOT E.T.A. Fayal a.m./29. Escort will not enter Harbour. MIRROR will carry on cable repairs in vicinity of Azores. COLTSFOOT will require fuel at Ponta Delgada before leaving area.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1154A/26 to Admty.)

/Majorca ....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic - contd.

Majorca Intelligence — Following to Admiralty for information. My 1545/12. An Italian S/M was seen at Calobra, Majorca, on 15/12 (Grade A1 Binoculars). An Italian bomber aircraft was seen falling into sea 2 miles from Formenter Cape on 19/12, 2 of crew baled out but were not picked up, one parachute made in Italy washed ashore. (Consul, Palma, Majorca, 1325/26 to S.O.I. Gib.)

JOAO PESSOA EUGENIO C. (German) — Arrivals 25th JOAO PESSOA and EUGENIO C to load Iron Ore, the latter at Castro Urdiales. JOAO PESSOA expected to be loaded tomorrow evening 27th. EUGENIO C ditto Monday evening 29th. (Consul, Bilbao 1459/26 to Admty.)

Air Attack on German Tanker. — 235. Your 1151A/25/12. Can any details be given of circumstances under which attack took place, was ship sunk? Was this same oiler referred to in A/M 1224A/23? (V.A.C.N.S. 1516A/26 to Admty.) Reply: 1114/27.

Axis Shipping. — Arrival 25th JOAO PESSOA, German. EUGENIO C. Italian. (Bilbao 1624/26 to M. of W.T.)

ARCTIC RANGER — Trawler ARCTIC RANGER is escort to Merchant Ship at present loading at Melilla. They may sail for Gibraltar without previous warning. (F.O.C.N.A. 2306A/26 to UNA, P.35.)

South Atlantic.

Troop Convoys. — Position. Convoy WS12ZA, WS12ZB and D.M.1 (A) Sailed 24/12. (Simonstown (?) 0737Z/26 to Admty.)

Capetown docks. — 7. My 1545N/18/10. Is any action being taken on proposal in para 2 please? (C. in C. S.A. 0952Z/26 to Admty.)

DAUNTLESS. — Your 21V5/21 not to Admty. Programme for DAUNTLESS is as follows. Simonstown depart Table Bay D/G Range arrive and depart all 29/12. Pointe Noire arrive 0700Z/3 depart 1700Z/4. Freetown arrive 0900Z/9 depart a.m./11. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1023Z/26 to C. in C. S.A.)

/ALCANTARA ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - contd.

ALCANTARA. Admty. 1609A/23 concur.
(C. in C. S.A. 1152Z/26 to B.A.R.M.)

W.S.14 Escort. I have only DERBYSHIRE available to escort Durban portion of W.S.14 due Cape area 4/1. Request whether you will have a cruiser available at Durban then in case it becomes necessary to reinforce this escort.
(C. in C. S.A. 1301Z/26 to C. in C. E.I.)

Defence of S. Africa. Ref. my G/SS/3839, 24/12. I now learn Smuts holds similar views to C.G.S. He considers defence of Union is purely a Naval and Air Force matter and that construction of pill boxes or other field works is purely waste of time. I cannot subscribe to this view nor do several senior staff officers at Defence H.Q. I feel that any reasonable efforts that can be made with limited resources available to make it that much more difficult for enemy is worth while. Chiefs of Staff appreciation would therefore be welcome.
(203 M.M. Pretoria 1345/26 to W.O.)

INDOMITABLE. Adm. 1944/16. Request E.T.A. Capetown.
(F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1440Z/26 to N.O.I.C. Trinidad Convoy W.S.12 ZB sailed 24/12 for Bombay, CAPETOWN CASTLE, EMPRESS OF JAPAN, DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, INDRAPOERA, DEUCALTON, ADRASTUS, EMPIRE STAR. Numbers carried. E.T.A. 1100Z/6/1.
(S.S.T.O. Durban 1552Z/26 to S.S.T.O. Bombay.)

OSKAWA. Have you any news of OSKAWA due Buenos Aires 17/12 from Trinidad?
(D.T.D. 1714A/26 to S.O.I. Montevideo) Reply: 1301/27.

MALANCHA PALACIO Admty. 1909A/4. MALANCHA and PALACIO arrived Freetown 25/12. Intend to sail both ships for Durban p.m./27th with local escort only.
(C. in C. S.A. 1755Z/26 to Admty.)

Force Q. Your 17030/18/12. All ships of Force Q. (QUEEN EMMA, PRINCESS BEATRIX, BACHAQUERO, MISOA, DEWDALE, ENNERDALE) at present at Freetown have foul bottoms. Speed in knots and dates when last docked.
(C. in C. S.A. 2115Z/26 to Admty.)

/MORETON BAY ...

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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - contd.

MORETON BAY. W.S.14.	Your 1616A/7. As MORETON BAY was not included Admty. 1834/13 it is presumed this ship did not sail. (C. in C. S.A. 2125Z/26 to Admty.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

MEMOS, LESBOS.	Merchant shipping Movements Summary 198. MEMOS overdue Alexandria from Haifa. A ship believed to be LESBOS is aground about 10 miles East of Cape Brulos. (Capt. O.S.,Alexandria 0243B/26 to Med Fleet, etc.)
PHENIX, Fire at Haifa.	My 11000/25 (? 1000/5 intended re situation of fire in harbour at 0900/25.) Situation 0900/Friday 25. Fire in PHENIX practically out. Haifa Port now open. Main Boom defence damaged by fire. One line only in operation. Court of Inquiry now sitting. (N.O.I.C. Haifa, 0934C/26 to C. in C. Med.)
ERIDGE, D.2.	Reverse course at 1400 and join me. Have just left Great Pass Beacon with ELPIS. (Capt. D.2, 1012B/26 to ERIDGE).
Enemy Destroyers, Tripoli.	My 1821/25 25/12. Amend cruisers outside Tripoli to read destroyers. (H.Q., Malta, 1025/26).
Enemy Destroyer.	P.C. and S. of enemy, 1 destroyer, is 31° 30' N. 16° 05' E. 270° 20 knots. Med. local call sign 76KFMI 1030/26 to Hal Far).
Operation M.F.1.	Carried (? Carry) out operation M F (? 1). D.1 day is today 26th. (C. in C. Med., 1108B/26 to V.A.Malta). Take CARLISLE, NIZAM, KINGSTON, ISAAC SWEERS under your orders. Carry out Operation M.F.1 D.1 day is today 26th. Sail when ready along reverse route of convoy M.E.8 to cross 021° 00' E. by 1600/27. V.A.Malta report expected position of Convoy M.E.8 at 1700/27. Report intended timing to 201 Nav. Co-Op. Group, to enable fighter protection to be arranged. (C. in C. Med., 1124B/26 to Capt. D.7).
Wreck.	Q B C 367 Mersa Matruh. Wreck exists in 031- 22' 47" N. 027° 14' 21"? E. This is 370 yards clear to eastwards of leading line for Mersa Matruh entrance, in 18 fathoms. (Alexandria, 1115B/26, to Med. Fleet).
WARSZAWA sunk.	PEONY and AVON VALE returning to Tobruk with survivors WARSZAWA, KIPLING and LEGION continuing search. (KIPLING 1125B/26, to Tobruk).
Losses, Publication.	It would be of some advantage if I could be informed before hand if and when losses H.M.Ships in Mediterranean are to be published. Request this information with regard to GALATEA. (C. in C. Med. 1210B/26 to Admty.)

/Yugo-Slav.....

MOST SECRET.

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Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - contd.

Yugoslav request for S/M.

Your 1042/3/10 and my 2301/6/10. Gen. Ilitch is pressing for a submarine to be allocated to and manned by Yugo-Slav Forces for use in landing supplies to assist "Insurrection" I have informed him that a submarine even if manned by Yugo-Slav could not be allocated solely for this purpose but that if one were allocated she could certainly include this work with her other operational duties What is present position as regards sending Yugo-Slavs to U.K. for manning a submarine?
(C. in C. Med., 1216B/26 to Admty. (R) Capt. S.1.)

WARSZAWA torpedoed.

WARSZAWA has been struck by torpedo aft, 32° 10' 24° 32', think she can keep afloat.
(PEONY, 1430B/26 to C. in C. Med.)
Ship afloat, may be able to tow, rescued survivors.
(PEONY, 1435B/26 to C. in C. Med.)
All soldiers probably saved, may tow Tobruk.
(PEONY, 1530B/26 to C. in C. Med.)
H.M.S. PEONY's 1430B/26. LEGION and KIPLING searching for S/M. Intend continuing search till dusk and then escorting PEONY and WARSZAWA to Tobruk. (KIPLING, 1538B/26 to C. in C. Med.)
Request aircraft protection, my position now is 32° 10' 24° 32'. (PEONY, 1540B/26 to Malta).
Have WARSZAWA in tow, AVON VALE screening, am proceeding to Tobruk.
(PEONY, 1605B/26 to C. in C. Med.)
Following has been read.
C. in C. Med. S.O. Force I., repeated Alexandria from PEONY.
Suggest area be avoided, suspect mine.
(KIPLING, 1609B/26, to Alexandria.)
Following has been read. BURGONET and ALISA (As decoded), have proceeded independently to Tobruk 6 miles apart. Request M.L. protection may be arranged during daylight hours.
(KIPLING, 1717B/26 to Alexandria).
2 A/S vessels and 2 sweepers being sent to assist with personnel. Send H.M.S. AVON VALE and one A/S vessel on with ALISA instantaneously others and destroyer with you.
(S.O., Force I 1718B/26 to PEONY).
Your 1609B/26. On what ground do you suspect mines? Was torpedo seen?
(C. in C. Med. 1735B/26 to PEONY).
WARSZAWA torpedoed again.
(PEONY, 1930B/26, to C. in C. Med.)
WARSZAWA sunk - all saved. (PEONY, 2025/26 to C. in C. Med., S.O. Force I., R.A.Alexandria).

Japanese Tactics and A/S Equipment.

Request information may be sought from U.S.Navy and Dutch Naval Authorities on use by Japanese of following in (?respect of) S/M's and A/S vessels. S/T or a Super S/T with frequency employed. Hydrophone directional quality and ability to

/receive ....

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - contd.

Japanese Tactics and A/S Equipment. (contd.)	receive asdic transmission. Echo detection device with frequency employed. General A/S tactics, size and number of depth charges used. Information is also requested on use by Japanese of R.D.F. for S/M surface vessels. (Capt. S.1, 1204B/26, to F.O.S. (R) TRUANT, TRUSTY, etc.)
Axis Shipping.	Departure 24th LISBOA for Marseilles. Arrival 22nd CASHELLON and SULLBERG (German). (Valencia, 1212/26 to M. of W.T.)
OLYMPUS.	OLYMPUS leaves Malta P.M./26 and expect to pass 38.05 N. 09.00 E. about 2000B/28, thence as ordered by you. OLYMPUS has been ordered to proceed submerged during daylight hours throughout whole of passage unless otherwise ordered and has 4 mark (iv) torpedoes on board. (V.A.Malta, 1230B/26, to F.O.C.N.A.)
TORBAY, TRIUMPH, CARLISLE.	Remain north of 032° 20' until 2200B/26. TRIUMPH sails 1600B through 033- 06' 027° 12'. CARLISLE and 3 destroyers cross your track from east to west about 2200B. (Capt. S.1. 1521B/26 to TORBAY (R) TRIUMPH.)
Libya.	Cositrep No.74. 1. It appears enemy have been compelled to withdraw to Agedabia and beyond. 4. Benghazi. Northern mole blown in many places, centre mole blocked by sunken ships, southern mole intact for 1300 feet from base. Bridge between town and southern mole demolished but pontoons available. No lighters or cranes. 5. TAC/R afternoon 25/12 reports five small ships off Ras Alla A 77843 also no signs enemy in Marada area. 10. R/C reported five small ships 20 miles north Ageila, course west. (C. in C. M.E., 1710/26).
Malta Air Report.	Night 25/26, 3 raiders crossed coast 1815 2126 2313 hours, bombed land sea, no damage, no Hurricanes up bad weather, A.A. probably destroyed 1 bomber. Wellingtons for Tripoli unable to take off, wind across runway. 1 Albacore dropped bombs, flares Tripoli town diversion for 4 Swordfish 3 Albacores which laid 7 mines outside Harbour. 1 hospital ship seen anchored Harbour entrance. 26/12. 3 alerts, 0632 hours. 6 R/C aircraft crossed coast, Hurricanes up, no interception; 0842 hours approx. 20 M.E., 109 escorting few JU 88 crossed, Hurricanes drove off attack, no bombs dropped. 1116 hours, 30 raiders, fighters and JU 88, attacked Luqa. 2 Blenheims 2 Wellingtons 1 Maryland 1 Hurricane destroyed.

/3 Blenheims....

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Malta Air Report. (contd.)

3 Blenheims 1 Maryland 1 Hurricane damaged. 1 civilian killed 3 wounded. Hurricanes up, no interception A.A. probably destroyed 1 JU 88. (H.Q., Malta, 1720/26).

SALVIA lost.

5 Regret to report SALVIA overdue and must be presumed lost. SALVIA last reported in 032° 06' N. 024° 46' E. at 2200/23 in vicinity of sinking of SHUNTIEN, having rescued about 100 survivors most probably prisoners of war. No known how many finally embarked. Weather moderate. Air search instituted 25th without result and so far no trace of wreckage or survivors. Until definite evidence to contrary is obtained possibility exists that crew was over powered and ship captured though this is considered most unlikely.
(C. in C. Med. 1922/26 to Admty.)

Convoy M.E.8.

M.E.8 and escort sailed 1900B/26. Cargo agreed.
(N.O.I.C. Malta, 2015B/26 to C. in C. Med.)

Malta Movements.

26/12 departure OLYMPUS, DIDO, AJAX, NESTOR, ARROW, FOXHOUND, GURKHA, LANCE, LIVELY.
(N.O.I.C. Malta, 2030B/26 to Admty.)

UTMOST.

Intend to sail UTMOST for U.K. shortly after arrival of P.35 and UNA in early January.
(Capt. S.10, 2031B/26 to Capt. S.1.)

Libya situation Report.

Cositrep No. 75.
1. 25/12. C.I.H. who reached Benghazi from N.E. report large ammunition depot found six miles from town. Benghazi power station in working order.
4. Large ship reported Bardia afternoon 25/12.
(C. in C. M.E., 2340/26 to W.O.)

MOST SECRET

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Conveyance of Shah of Persia.

F.O. state that desired to move ex Shah of Persia and accompanying personnel, about 15, to Canada. Request you arrange for a suitable vessel to call Mauritius on route Durban for this purpose.
(D.of S.T.0319A/26 to P.S.T.O. India).

Surabaya mining.

Q.C.A. 344 Surabaya. Port Montrose closed owing to mines.
(S.O.I. Colombo 0700Z/26 to all concerned Q.C.A.344).

Goa.

Chiefs of Staff consider and F.O. concur that we should not attempt anything in Goa at present owing to delicate situation with Portuguese Gov. over Timor.
(1st Sea Lord 1148A/26 to C.in C. E.I.,W.O., 1000/26 to C.in C. India).

Rangoon raid 23/12.

Further details raid Rangoon 23/12. Rangoon City and harbour also attacked. (A.H.Q. India 1205/26).

Diego Garcia.

My 1356/17 and my 1318/23. I have been informed the Indian troops at Diego Garcia do not anticipate completing defence until end of March. O.C. Force Shortcut estimates that by using M.N.B.D.O. personnel and equipment he can complete by early February.
(C.in C. E.I. 1214Z/26 to Admty.).

TEVIOT BANK.

I am reviewing policy of defensive mining on E.I. Station in light of present conditions and matter is now under discussion with ARMINDIA. I hope to be able to reply to your 0313/22 shortly.
(C.in C. E.I. 1216Z/26 to C.in C. E.F.).

ATREUS

Ref. 1946/19 from Admty. Intend Mine Carrier ATREUS to lay quard loop at Colombo vide my 0808 Monday (Presumably 0808Z/21 intended) before she lifts and relays gun Channel guard loop. Latter operation will commence about 6/1.
(C.in C. E.I. 1218Z/26 to Admty.).

Mines.

My 1533/13 and C.B. 4082 Para. 5. 1. To take full advantage of the non-contact properties of the M Mark I Mine it is desirable to lay them at a greater depth than the draught of the ship attacked. 2.In Home Waters it is the practice to

/lay...

MOST SECRET.

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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATION.

East Indies.

Mines. -Contd. lay these mines at a depth of at least 18 feet below chart datum. (D.D.O.D.(M) 1824A/26 to C.in C. E.I.).

Minesweepers. My 2304/25/11. 170th M/S Group for Colombo has been delayed. (D.M.S. 1838A/26 to C.in C. E.I.).

Rangoon raid. Personal for C.I.G.S. from General Wavell.
1. Rangoon Town and Mingaldon Aerodrome were raided yesterday by 54 Japanese bombers escorted by 30 fighters. Comparatively little damage was done and over 20 Japanese planes shot down. But we lost 6 planes (4 in the air 2 on the ground) and A.V.G. lost 2 planes so that air strength is considerably weakened, and if Japanese persist they will soon reduce our fighter force to nil. Reinforcements of Burma by 2 fighter squadrons is vitally urgent.
2. Mass exodus of civilian population from Rangoon has created many difficult military problems. Labour for unloading ships, and much other urgent work is (?unobtainable). Such troops as can be made available are being used for unloading ships in (dock?).
(G.H.Q. India 2045/26)

Battleships. Until it becomes possible to reform a strong Eastern Fleet, REVENGE, ROYAL SOVEREIGN and other "R" class battleships as they arrive may be employed on convoy escort work west of Malay barrier.
2. Their employment without destroyer escort must depend on local U/B situation.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 2352A/26 to C.in C. E.F. C.in C. E.I.).

China.

B.M.9 A. Request disposal Convoy B.M.9.A after unloading at Singapore.
(R.A. Malaya 0343Z/26 to D.of S.T.).

/Escort....

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China -Contd.

Escort for Australian reinforcements.

Ref. Commonwealth Gov. telegram 828 to C.in C. Far East para. No.2.
(1) Ships available from East Indies and Eastern Fleet are for the moment the bare minimum for escort of reinforcements from west to Sunda Strait and from Sunda Strait to Singapore. This is reason for request in my 0918Z/25 (N.T. in W.R.).
(2) If Australian reinforcements are likely to start in near future will it be possible for R.A.N. to provide cruiser escort for them through to Singapore or alternatively to route them via Torres Straits with Task Force 5 as escort?
(C.in C. E.F. 0427Z/26 to A.C.N.B.(R) Admty. C.in C. E.I.).

Situation report 1630 G.MT./25.

Sarawak. No cumminications since yesterday evening. B.R. Sibu reports five bombs dropped by seven enemy aircraft at Sibu.
Air R/C 25/12. P.R.U. Kuching Area 8 transports one Smd. and one destroyer in vicinity of T,G. Sipang. Two barges one Smd. at mouth of river 5 miles N. of Kuching aerodrome, no activity in Kuching River.
(G.O.C. Malaya 0555/26 to W.O.).

W/T

Following wave frequencies are allocated.
3300k/s destroyer fire-control wave for use when ordered by S.O. destroyers present for concentration or intercommunication between destroyers differently classed or flotillas.
850 k/s common flotillas wave for use as ordered by S.O. destroyers present. R/T may be used between destroyers when hunting on either wave by day and on flotillas wave only by night. P/L is not to be used except in emergency with C.O's approval.
(C.in C. E.F. 1155Z/26 to Eastern Theatre, Admty.).

PERSEE.

My 2251/4. French ship PERSEE, ex PIERRE L.D. was still at Saigon on 10/12.
(D.D.I.C. 1240A/26 to C's. in C. etc.).

N.E.I. Army, Air Force.

Requirements of N.E.I. for aircraft and A/A guns.
(C.in C. F.E. 1621/26 to W.O.).

/Air...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 26.12. 1941. Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. -Contd.

Air report. Daily Op. Summ. up to 1030Z/26. Diverging search on mean bearing of 023° from Pulo Aur to a depth of 230 miles. Large explosion position 02° 08' N. 104° 21' E. possibly enemy submarine blown up by minefield or possibly mine exploded. R/C Kuching area 4 transports 1 burning number of barges, 1 light cruiser, 1 destroyer, all northwest Tanjong Sipang. No land operations observed. R/C confirms successful demolition Kuching also that Singkawang still unserviceable owing to bombing.
(A.H.Q.F.E. 1745/26 to Air Min.).

Borneo. Instructions for removal or demolition of all small craft (Govr. North Borneo 1746/26, tc S. of S. for Colonies) See Lion Copy.

Troop Convoys. Reinforcements for Singapore already arranged appear to be as follows.
(a) B.M.9a - Leaving Bombay 21/12 - see P.S.T.O India 0729Z/19/12.
(b) B.M.9b - Leaving Bombay 22/12 - see P.S.T.O India 0729Z/19/12.
(c) B.M.10 - Leaving Bombay 8/1 - see P.S.T.O India 0606Z/25/12.
(d) B.M.11 - Leaving Bombay 14/1 - see P.S.T.O India 0606Z/25/12.
(e) D.M.1 - Leaving Durban 24/12 - see C.in C. E.I. 0800Z/25/12.
(f) S.S.1 - Leaving Calcutta about 29/12 - see C.in C. East Indies 0806Z/23.
(g) U.M.1 - Leaving Melbourne 31/12 - see A.C.N.B. 0635Z/25.
(h) U.M.2 (AQUITANIA) - Leaving Sydney 7/1 - see A.C.N.B. 0635Z/25.
(2) Request you will signal for information of War Cabinet your confirmation of the above and your intentions for:-
(a) Ocean Escort.
(b) A/S Escort.
(c) Route East of Sunda Strait.
(d) Air Escort.
(e) Protection against mines.
(3) Request your views on employment of AQUITANIA. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1916A/26 to C.in C.E.F.).

Dutch Air Forces. Following are dispositions of Dutch Air Forces 25/12/41. (1) Army.
(2) Navy. Groups of 3 F/BS each. 2 Natuna Pontianak area. 2 Batavia Sunda area. 1 Tarakan 2 Celebes New Guinea area. At least 50% reserves of Catalinas or Dornier boats. Believed 10 American P.B.Y's. now operating Ambon area.
(C.in C. F.E. 2116/26 to W.O.).

MOST SECRET

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Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

QUEEN MARY. My 0256/23. Destination of QUEEN MARY is New York. 2. Tanker MIRZA may be used for bunkering QUEEN MARY at Trinidad as required.
(D. of S.T. 0320A/26 to N.O.I.C. Trinidad.)

CIRCASSIA. C. in C. W.A. 16430/20 and CIRCASSIA's 18150/22, not to Admiralty and B.A.D. CIRCASSIA arrived 0930Z/24. Repairs now completed.
(N.O.I.C. Trinidad 0952Q/26 to C. in C. W.A.)

German Use of French Ships. Intercept states following French ships being operated in Mediterranean by Germans: KERKENA ILE ROUSSE GRAND-QUEVILLY, MOSTAGANEM, CAP PINEDE, BONIFACIO, ESPIGUETTE, BOUGARONI, LEZARDRIEUX.
(S.O.I. Jamaica 1004R/26 to D.N.I. etc.)

St. Pierre Miquelon. Your 1131A/25 para 2 (Occupation of Island Saint Pierre by Adm. Muselier unknown to Admty.) It was assumed that Admty. were aware of the operation vide last para. of Natal T.O.O. 1910A/16/12 (Saint Pierre and Miquelon to be taken under Allied control.)
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1052Q/26 to Admty.)

Navigation Lights. My 1022Q/8. Amend to read Areas No.8 and 10.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1053Q/26 to A.W.I. Stn. etc.)
Your 1811A/24. G.B.M.S. message was received from broadcast to area 10 only in accordance with A.F.O. S.3/41. Suggest general promulgation by Admiralty lettered message.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1057Q/26 to Admty.)

WYOMING (French) My 1649R/24. Ship sailed St. Thomas 2000 G.M.T/25 for Guadeloupe with 1600 tons oil fuel.
(S.O.I. Jamaica 1156R/26 to Admty. etc.)

NEREUS. Your 1601/23. N.C.S.O. Baltimore reports arrival of Greek NEREUS on 31st vide his Vesca 2312/22.
(D.T.D. 1226A/26 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

/Washington ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - contd.

Washington Report.

Washops. 16.
(i) Philippine Is. Manila has been declared an open city. Adm. Hart has left Manila to join U.S. Naval forces in South. Adm. Haswell is now in command of U.S. Naval Force with his H.Q. on Corregidor. Recent report from U.S. S/Ms of Asiatic Fleet claim following successes - one transport and one minesweeper sunk. One transport probably sunk, one seaplane tender possibly sunk.
(ii) Hawaii. 25/12. U.S. Destroyer DRAYTON claims a successful attack on a Japanese S/M 60 miles south of Oahu at 0140Z/25. After dropping depth charges the bow of submarine broke surface went vertical and sank. 26/12. Two submarines were sighted westward of Kauai. One was attacked by aircraft apparently without success.
(J.S.M. Washington 1343R/26 to Admty. etc.)

Escorts for S.C. and O.N.(S) Convoys.

Your 1651R/25. Grateful for C.N.O's concurrence in southerly routeing but request you will explain (a) that no long endurance British escorts are now available for trade convoys, those in service being required to meet troop convoy commitments. (b) That Southerly routeing will not alter in any way present system of M.O.M.P. Only difference is that Canadian escort when relieved will proceed to Londonderry to fuel instead of Iceland (C).
2. It is presumed that escort for ships proceeding to Iceland (C) will be arranged by C.N.O.
(A.C.N.S.(T) 1420A/26 to B.A.D.)

?

Your 1510Z/26 (N.T. in W.D.) affirmative 2300/26 Opnav.
(U.S. Govt. Washington to Admty., recd. 0037/27.)

TRAIL.

TRAIL's 1515Z/25. Request she may be ordered to return to St. John's N.F. as soon as you can arrange for vessel to stand by SHANTUNG. TRAIL urgently required to rejoin proper Task unit. (C.C.N.F. 1556Z/26 to A.C.I.C.) W.D. Note.- SHANTUNG on fire (Home Commands) TRAIL standing by.

DELHI.

B.A.R.M.'S 1046R/24. On completion of DELHI'S working up B.A.R.M. and C. in C. A.& W.I. are requested to sail her for the Clyde. A.M. 1612A/1/11 refers.
(D.O.D.(F) 1630A/26 to B.A.R.M., C. in C. A.W.I.)

/DJEBEL NADOR ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - contd.

DJEBEL NADOR. Your 1039R/26 (N.T.in W.D. Ship reported loading rubber at Oran.) Further information including probable date of sailing of DJEBEL NADOR urgently required.
(D.N.I. 1659A/26 to B.A.D.)

T.C.17. Anticipated that by end of February there will be approx. 15,000 Canadian military personnel awaiting transport to U.K. Request you will ask Opnav if suitable date can be arranged end of February or early March when U.S. escort can be provided for this convoy.
(A.C.N.S.(H) 1702A/26 to B.A.D.)

Troop Convoys, T.C., N.A. Your 2245Z/9. T.C. convoys will in future be run at intervals of two to three months, sailing dates to be dependent on the ability of U.S. authorities to provide escort.
2. Arrangements are being made for the escorts of C.T. convoys to return with intermediate convoys of approx. two ships which will be known as N.A. convoys and which will be primarily used for the transport of Air Force and R.N. personnel.
3. N.A.1. consisting of BERGENSFJORD and STRATHEDEN will leave Halifax approx. 9/1 and N.A.2 will leave Halifax approx. 23/1.
4. U.S. authorities are being requested to suggest a suitable date at the end of February or early March for sailing T.C.17 from Halifax.
(A.C.N.S.(H) 1703A/26 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

MARSDALE. St. John N.B. departure MARSDALE for patrol area B.X.2 E.T.A. 1200Z/30.
(C.O.A.C. Halifax 1902Z/26 to Admty. etc.)

French Fishing Vessels. Your 2204/29/11 and 1202/14/7. Assume all French fishing vessels are still to be brought in when season reopens on Newfoundland Banks and that Opnav is fully conversant with our attitude.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1902Z/26 to Admty.)

O.N.48. O.N.48, serial number 4, N.U, steering direct to (f), omitting (e). (Admiralty diversion.)
(U.S.C.N.O., 1937/26 to Com Task Unit 4.1.12.)

COZALLA. Algiers 25/11 (?25/12) B.3. Consul now reports S.S. COZALLA, ex SERAFIN TOPIC, has proceeded to Bone, and states she probably took on Iron Ore and military equipment at Algiers. Rumoured she carried also Cobalt, Gold and Rubber.
(B.A.D., 1945R/26 to Admty. V.A. Malta.)

/Free ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - contd.

Free French at St. Pierre.

My 1910Z/24. Sailed ALYSSE 1900Z today for St.Johns N.F. ACONITE will sail for St. Johns N.F p.m./ 27 and will be ready for sea after refuelling. Intend remaining with MIMOSA and French S/M SURCOUF for local organisation and defence. All is proceeding absolutely calmly and satisfactorily.
(Adm. Muselier, 2120Z/26 to C.C.N.F. (R) Admty., C.O.A.C., Capt. D. St. Johns, N.F.)

S.C. Convoys, Escort Groups.

Following is a repetition of F.O.N.F's 1837Z/24.
1. Dates of sailing of S.C. convoys from Halifax present difficult problem for N.F.
2. If Iceland is still in use the escort of S.C.65 which in present schedule would leave St. Johns 15/1 to arrive Iceland 26th or 27/1 and return with O.N.62 will not sail St. Johns until 19/1. This means that this escort group under best conditions will have only about 36 hours in Iceland before it must sail for O.N.62. The same thing would apply to all future escort groups. This tolerance is insufficient to allow for weather delays.
3. If Londonderry is in use the same thing occurs. This very short turn round even if it can be achieved is most undesirable.
4. If alternatively one escort group is sailed independently from St. Johns to return with the first O.N.convoy after the change comes into effect, this will mean that all future escorts will spend some 7½ to 8 days at either Iceland or Londonderry at the expense of the time they should be spending at St. Johns or Halifax for repairs, training and recreation.
5. This could be remedied by forming an 8th group but this at present is out of the question.
6. Alternatively if sailing of first S.C. convoy from Halifax could be advanced to 14/1 or retarded to 20/1 and thereafter every six days the escort problem would be solved. 1837Z/24 ends.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2226Z/26, to Admty., Opnav.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Australian Units off Numea, etc., Notification & liaison.

Following from French High Commissioner (begins)
(1) Early 18/12 2 unannounced warships eventually recognised as Australian were observed about 20 miles from Numea.
(2) About same time a seaplane flew further north over New Caledonia. As seaplane omitted to first identify itself to Amedee Lighthouse and failed to approach on course agreed on 9/12 with Numea R.A.A.F. Commander, it was nearly attacked by ground defences before recognised as Australian.
(3) To minimize danger to shipping and aircraft using French ports, would it be possible to advise me in advance of all movements of warships,

/merchant ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 26.12.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - contd.

Australian Units off Numea, etc., Notification & liaison. (Contd.)	merchant ships, aircraft, Allied as well as enemy, in Area New Caledonia, New Hebrides and Australia, New Zealand. (4) Am sending to Australian Commandant Gilbert O.C. Marines and Air New Caledonia and my Liaison Officer Lt. Cdr. Galsworthy to discuss with you certain questions regarding Naval Liaison etc. (Melbourne, T.H.I. 0210/26 to N.O., Wellington, Admty. for F.N.F.L. London.)
Enemy Aircraft from Ships.	(i) MAIANA reported ship 1800Z/24 which launched aircraft at 1905Z/24. (ii) TARAWA reported Cruiser operating a seaplane at 2355Z/24. Both reports graded B.2. (Omitted probably N.Z.N.B., 0415Z/26 to C. in C. E.F., Admty. etc.)
Convoy M.S.1.	Your 1233A/19. Following ships will be included in convoy M.S.1 from Melbourne to Singapore 1/1:- PEISANDER, PHRONTIS, ENGGANO, TJIKARANG. (A.C.N.B. 0704Z/26 to Admty.)
HOBART.	Your 0918Z/25 (N.T.in W.D.) Concur. HOBART should proceed from Singapore to Fremantle with all despatch. Request E.T.A. My 0635Z/25 refers (A.C.N.B. 1024Z/26 to C. in C. E.F.)
LE TRIOMPHANT.	Departure Numea for Brisbane 0230Z French Light Cruiser LE TRIOMPHANT, E.T.A. 0150Z/27. (A.C.N.B. 1434Z/26 to Admty. etc.)
BRITISH SAILOR.	My 1104Z/23. C. in C. E.I. vesca, BRITISH SAILOR at Tjilatjap en route Darwin. (A.C.N.B. 1436Z/26 to Admty. etc.)
Timor Air operations.	My 1941Z/25. Situation at Dilli as regards compliance of local authorities (and also Portuguese Government) is at present somewhat (?confused). Japanese aircraft (type 97 F/B) flew over Vunakanau aerodrome, Rabaul 0410Z/25. Further attacks carried out 25/12 against Kapine Tarangi by R.A.A.F. aircraft which again met air opposition. (A.C.N.B. 2031Z/26 to Admty. etc.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 26.12.1941. Friday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

WARSZAWA. See Mediterranean.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated approx. positions of U/Bs.
(D.D.I.C. 1431A/26 1433A/26).

1245A/25. Following report made verbally by T L C 144 on arrival at Oban (begins):- Sighted S/M in 057° 44' 24" N. 006° 42' 36" W. approx. at 1245A/25 whilst on passage from Stornoway escorted by H.M.T.SOUTHERN WAVE. (Ends). SOUTHERN WAVE reports search but with negative result. Investigation reveals that C/O of T L C 144 is definite in his opinion that he sighted a conning tower and had it in view for two minutes at a distance of ½ mile on a course approx. S. 60 W. magnetic. This is corroborated by Second Skipper T L C 144. (N.O.I.C.Oban, 1620A/26 to C. in C. W.A., etc.)

1430B (Med.) Enemy Submarine reported in 032° 10' N. 024° 32' E. at 1430B today. (Alexandria 1644B/26 to Force I., Med Fleet).

Submarines Attacked.

Following has been read (begins) KK. Have attacked oil streak with depth charges and estimate no hits.
(C. in C. W.A., 1155/26 to SEC O.S. Convoy 15).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

27.12. 1941.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Visual R/C of Brest at 1639 showed that GNEISENAU was not alongside the Torpedo Boat Station. The dry docks and the remainder of the port could not be seen, on account of low visibility.

Enemy Air Operations.

Convoy F.S.84 was attacked off Saltburn late this evening. No damage was caused and one enemy aircraft was destroyed by the fire of the ships in convoy.

Mining.

The Port of Liverpool, including the swept channel seems to have been closed tonight until tomorrow morning.

North Atlantic.

ALOUETTE is sending in S.S. EL CONDADO (Spanish) to Gibraltar under armed guard.

South Atlantic.

Falklands. R.A.S.A.D. considers that recent Japanese successes and desire to exploit them render more likely on attack on the Falklands. He proposes ASTURIAS should proceed there now and BULOLO after fuelling

/at...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

Falklands. -Contd.

at Buenos Aires on 29-30/12. He also proposes to go to Falklands in BIRMINGHAM after a conference with the Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro on 30/12.

Mediterranean.

Malta.

9 raiders dropped bombs on Malta at 1557 today and caused civilian casualties.

Tunisia

F.O.C.N.A. reports from a secret source on the petrol supplies in Tunisia. The Air Force is given as 100 planes which could not operate more than 4 days, and the Army estimated at 15,000 men with little mechanisation.

Libya and Western Desert.

N.O.I.C. Benghazi reports no positive evidence of any mines inside the harbour, but weather is severely impeding reconnaissance. He still has no power boat.

Sweeping of the northern channel into Benghazi is to begin at dawn/30, provided fighter protection is available.

LEGION was attacked at 1410 today by 4 torpedo bombers in 32° 5' N. 24° 30' E. and drove off the enemy without suffering any damage.

East Indies.

Convoy W.S. 12 X. escorted by DORSETSHIRE, arrived at Bombay today.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

27.12. 1941.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

China.

Malaya

Lieut.-Gen. (Acting General) Sir Henry Pownall has arrived in Singapore to take up the appointment of C.in C. Far East in succession to Air Chief Marshal Sir R. Brooke-Popham.

C. in C. E.F. emphasises the necessity of reinforcing Malaya quickly. The escorts for reinforcements already arranged are weak, but time does not permit awaiting U.S.A. co-operation. It is a race against Japanese seizing and using aerodromes in S.W. Borneo.

America and West Indies.

C.in C. A.W.I. considers it most important that British naval patrols should be allowed into Panamanian territory when one of H.M. ships is present.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Japanese A/S methods. In view of the imminent departure of two T class submarines to the Far East, request all available information on Japanese A/S methods and devices and their capabilities may be communicated. Information is also requested on the possible use of R.D.F. by the Japanese for detection of surface vessels. (F.O.S. 0039A/27 to Admty.)

Corvettes temporary stationed in Iceland (C). Following arrangements are to be made for relief.
(C. in C. W.A., 1447A/27).

Movements.

STORK. Arrived 0001 STORK. (C. in C. Plymouth 0008/27).

O.21. My 0731/27. Sailed CUTTY SARK with O.21.
(F.O.I.C.Milford Haven 1015A/27 to F.O.I.C. Greenock).
Arrangements for sailing to Dundee.
(Capt. (S) 3. 1801A/27).
My 1624A/27 O/21 and CUTTY SARK have been ordered to proceed Dundee instead of Greenock.
(C. in C. W.A. 2026A/27 to BOADICEA, COVERLEY, CONVOLVULUS, IMPULSIVE, SNOWDROP, HYDRANGEA, ULSTER QUEEN, COVENTRY CITY Escorts of B.B.17.
Repeated N.Os. i/c Holyhead, Liverpool, Greenock, F.O.S. S.9. S.5, WHITE BEAR, CUTTY SARK.

URSULA. (1) Leave patrol after dark 27/12 and proceed to Portsmouth routed as follows (A) 048° 52' N. 005° 46' W. (B) 050° 12' N. 001° 18' W. to R/V 050° 31' N. 000° 41' W. at 0900A/30.
(2) S.B.R. arranged. (A) area 53 1200/28 to 2359/29. (B) area 41 0001/29 to 1200/30.
(3) Attention is called to QZX376A British ground magnetic mines dropped in error approx. in 049° 44' N. 002° 34' W.
(Capt. (S) 5, 1025A/27 to URSULA.)

BARCLOSE, BARFOAM, BARFORD. C. in C. W.A. 2354A/10. If weather forecast is not unfavourable. Intend sailing B.D.V's.
BARCLOSE, BARFOAM and BARFORD with Ferry Steamers CARDAK and SILIVRI in company for Horta, Fayal at 0900/28. Code Word "Saxhorn".
(F.O.I.C.Milford Haven 1107A/27).

BREDA, Information for H.31. BREDA will be in the vicinity of 180° Lizard Head 5 miles from 1600/27 until 1000/28. Lizard Head light will be exhibited 5 minutes every half hour

/during ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

BREDA, Information for H.31 (contd.)

during the night.
(N.O.I.C.Falmouth 1216A/27 to H.31).
Re sailing BREDA for this position.
(F.O.I.C.Falmouth 1224/27th).
LEWES leaves Plymouth 0930A/28th for Scapa.
20 knots. (Capt. (S) 3. 2133A/27 to H.31).

S/M Movements.

Following Submarines included on passage tonight Saturday and may be met during dark hours.
STURGEON escorted by WHITE BEAR left Holylock 1700A/27th for Scapa. O.21 Escorted by CUTTY SARK left Milford Haven 1015A/27th for Greenock.
(C. in C. W.A. 1624A/27 to BOADICEA, COVERLEY, CONVOLVULUS, IMPULSIVE, COVENTRY CITY, HYDRANGEA, S.E.E., B.B.17 ULSTER QUEEN Repeated N.O.i/c Holyhead, Liverpool, Greenock, F.O.(S) Capt.(S) 5, Capt. (S) 9, WHITEBEAR, CUTTY SARK.

Operations.

Operation "Archery".

Operation "Archery," appendix B. para. 14 add.
Any tankers will use following identification signals if challenged. By day flags J O E international. By night flash group J O E
(F.O.S. 0306A/27 to TUNA, Reptd. C.S.10).
Scheme B. Request Sumburgh Head from as soon as possible until 0700A/27 only.
(D.C. 0455A/27 to N.O.I.C.Lerwick).
Your 0455A/27. Arranged.
(N.O.i/c Lerwick 0604A/27 to Admty).
TUNA has been ordered to adjust route to pass through 061° 45' N. 003° 15' E. in search of Hampden Aircraft reported in distress at 1230.
(F.O.S. 1754A/27 to S.O. Force F.)
TUNA is also searching position 061° 45' N. 003° 15' E. (C.S. 10, 1927A/27 to ORIBI).
Proceed Scapa (C.S. 10 2159A/27 to ORIBI).

Biscay S/M Patrol.

My 1129A/24. There are now eight Submarines on patrol in Bay of Biscay off Brest. One more arrives on patrol in this area A.M.28th, and one leaves patrol P.M.27th. (F.O.S. 1018A/27).
(a) At 2359A/27 H.33 proceeding to patrol in position 26 (b) O.10 after passing through position 24 proceed to patrol in position 25 to arrive this position not earlier than 0400A 28th.
(F.O.S. 1839A/27 to H.33, O.10.)

Patrol "White."

My position at 1200N will be 066° 24' North 023° 24' West speed 14 knots SWEETBRIAR in company reference F.V.C.19 request position.
(VERONICA, 1026Z/27 to C.S.1).
Formation R. (a) VERONICA 067° 30' N. 022° 30' W.

/(b)...

MOST SECRET.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Patrol "White." (contd.)

(b) Not applicable. (c) SWEETBRIAR 268° (?). Patrol on course 90° Ice in 067° 51' N. 023° 40' W. running 050° and loose ice also extends 180° for 35 miles from that position. NORFOLK going west of minefield to investigate ice. RENOWN informed S.O. P.A. (C.S.1 (?) 1502N/27 to VERONICA SWEETBRIAR Repeated A.C.I.C. RENOWN C. in C. H.F.) could be 44'.

WHITEHALL.

On completion of exercise assume that WHITEHALL will patrol today in accordance with 48 K of 24/12. (Capt. (D) 13. 1119/27 to WHITEHALL).

Operation Anklet.

(a) A.C.O.S. is requested to sail STURGEON after fuelling for Vest Fiord to arrive A.M./3/1 for patrol as ordered by S.O.Force J.
(b) S.O.Force J is requested to sail SEALION 3/1 to R/V off Shetlands as directed by Capt. (S) 3 for onward passage to Holy Loch. Also to sail STURGEON for Polyarnoe on 10/1.
(c) S.B.N.O. North Russia is requested to sail SEAWOLF so as to arrive at Vest Fiord 10/1. for patrol as ordered by S.O.Force J.
(F.O.(S). 1238A/27).

TUNA.

1. TUNA is to leave Patrol at 1900A/27 routed through (a) 062° 10' N. 003° W. (b) 062° N. 002° E. (c) 061° 31' N. 000° 15' W. to R/V escort in 060° 52' N. 000° 39' W. at 1400A/28 for onward passage to Scapa.
2. TUNA is to proceed diving by day when east of the meridian of Greenwich thereafter on the surface at C.O's discretion.
3. Name of escort will be signalled.
(Capt. (S) 3, 1343A/27 1638/27 to TUNA).
My 1343A/27.
(1) T.B.R. are in force area 101 South of 063° N. and area 15 North of 061° N.
(2) S.B.R. arranged 30 miles either side of line joining 062° N. 002° E. and 061° 31' N. 000° 15' W. from 0001A/27th to 1200A/28th.
(3) T.B.R. arranged in area 22 South of 062° N. and east of 002° W. and in area 14 west of 001° E. from 0500A/28th to 1800A/28th.
(4) Name of escort is STELLA PEGASI.
(Capt. (S) 3. 1423A/27, 1642/27 to TUNA).

British Air Operations.

Operation "Archery."

(1) A.O.C. C.C. 2041/24. Fighter escort will be by Blenheims until 1015 then by Beau fighters until 1600 hours.
(2) Hampdens will co-operate as arranged.
(18 Group 0205/27 to C.S.10).

/Operation ...

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HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Operations. - contd.

Operation "Anklet." — Aircraft R/C for D.2 cancelled owing to adverse weather conditions at Case (? base). (18 Group 0207/27 to S.O. Force J.)

Enemy Air Operations.

Convoy F S 84. attacked. — One enemy aircraft destroyed by gunfire from ships in convoy. One bomb dropped no damage. (LOWESTOFT 2215A/27). Convoy estimated off Hartlepool at this time. (C. in C. Rosyth 2357/27). Further to my 2215A 27th and your 2234 27th. Aircraft was shot down 054° (?Saltburn) 6½ miles. One yellow float and one rubber cushion marked G U R T 2 seen but not recovered by WOOLSTON who was investigating. Any survivors from aircraft considered impossible. (LOWESTOFT 2354A/27 to C. in C. Rosyth.)

Mining.

NL.52. — My 1321A/26. Postponed owing to weather. (V.A.Dover 0146A/27).

Operation Q.O. — Operation Q O cancelled today owing to weather. (C. in C. Nore 0412A/27 to M/S 9.)

Fast Minelayers. — R.A.(M) 1033/26 (N.T. in W.D.) concur operating fast minelayers from Milford Haven. (C. in C. Plymouth 1316/27 to Admty.)

Clyde — SHIANT reports having sunk a mine in 267° Kingston 2.6 miles at 1100/27. (WESTERN ISLES 1738A/27 to F.O.i/c Greenock).

Bristol Channel. — Exploded Red at 1416 in 350° 8 cables from Faltholm Light. Probable date of laying 1/12/41. (Capt. M/S Bristol Channel 1739A/27).

Thames Estuary. — Apparent mine explosion observed at 1303 in approx. position S.E. Shipwash Buoy. No ships in vicinity. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1912A/27).

Humber. — Following acoustic mine exploded 27/12. (F.O. Humber 2028A/27).

Liverpool. — Your 1930A/27th Port including Swept Chanr closed until 1000A 28th. Acknowledged. (N.O.I.C. Liverpool 2129A/27 to VETCH)

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HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.

GNEISENAU — My 2037A/23. Visual R/C of Brest at 1639/27. GNEISENAU definitely not alongside Torpedo Boat Station. Dry docks and remainder of port not seen due to bad visibility. No photographs taken. (D.D.I.C. 1856 A/27).

Casualties & Defects.

EMPIRE LOUGH (Leaking 26/12). — Expect to arrive number 5 buoy 0145/27 EMPIRE LOUGH in company. (WIDGEON 0035A/27 to C.in C. Nore). Departure Tug KROOMAN to assist EMPIRE LOUGH. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0128A/27). My 0128A/27. Tug KROOMAN and EMPIRE LOUGH now anchored in Yarmouth Roads. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0729A/27).

S.S. EMPIRE MARLOWE — Arrived in tow of FREEBOOTER escorted by SNOWDROP. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0135A/28).

NORTHERN GEM. — My 1430A/26 and Capt. D. Londonderry's 1756A/26* NORTHERN GEM unable to sail owing to engine defects. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 2035A/27). *Re Escorts for U.R.4.

Shipping & Convoys.

H.X.165. KASTELHOLM INDUS. — All ships present at R/V but KASTELHOLM and INDUS now missing. (BOADICEA 0232A/27).

H.X.166 — Proceed to Iceland (C) to fuel. Ships will be required to meet H.X.166 about 31/12. (C.in C. W.A. 1101A/27 to HONEYSUCKLE, GARDENIA, GENTIAN).

Navigation lights. — A.M "HN". Except in coastal waters, merchant ships are not to burn navigation lights in areas, 4A, 4B, 8 and 10. In coastal waters in these areas dimmed navigation lights may be shown. C.A.M.S.I. 463 is amended accordingly. (D.T.D. 1510Z/27 to G.B.M.S. in all areas except A.I.G.12).

/Q.P.4. ...

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. - contd.

Q P 4.

My 2230C/26th. Molotovsk ships in company of STALIN 60 miles N.W. from Molotovsk at 1420C/27th. They should reach clear water between Panoiand Terski Orlov during daylight 29th but further progress will be reported. COCLE has now been able to join but icebreaker LENIN has broken 2 more Dvina ships over bar. Possible therefore other Dvina ships will arrive clear water in a few days time when local escort will be required to take them from Terski to ice free anchorage in Kolorlop Inlet as Stepanovsay Ioranka at present has no room. I fully realise disadvantage but consider release of ships from ice of paramount importance. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 1801C/27 to Admty. S.B.N.O. Murmansk, EDINBURGH).
My 1801C 27th. All Dvina portion are now broken out over bar. Molotovsk portion are making very bad headway speed 1 cable to 1 knot. If you can delay R/V at Panoi Terski Orlov there is an excellent chance of bringing out all 12 ships together. I will keep you fully informed. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 2235C/27 to Admty. S.B.N.O. Murmansk, EDINBURGH).

O.G.Convoys.

O.G. Convoys. W.A.C.I's Part 110.
In view of 573AZ the estimated time of crossing 11° 00' W. will not be signalled in future.
(C. in C. W.A. 1852A/27 to Capts. D. Liverpool, Londonderry, Greenock, Repeated Admty. F.O.C.N.A. N.C.S.O. Mersey for Cdre.)
Re plot of Convoy positions more important to maintain than W/T silence.

P Q 7.

Your 1511N/26. Request names of 2 ships sailed may be signalled. It is important that detailed sailing telegrams of P.Q. convoys should reach Admty. with least possible delay and repeated to Admiral Miles. (D.T.D. 1906A/27 to A.C.I.(C).)

S L 94.

Warmest congratulations on bringing safely to the U.K. all the ships of your convoy.
(C. in C. W.A. 1912A/27 to Cdre. Crabbe).

British signal letters allotted to Allied Ships.

Admty. 942A/20. British signal letters have been allocated to Norwegian, Polish, Greek and Belgian merchant vessels, and published in "S" Orders. British signal letters are also being allocated to Free French merchant vessels. 2. N.C.S.O's are to be instructed that the recognition procedure is to be explained to Masters of allied merchant ships and their War W/T call signs taken from S.P.02182 series are to be given to them as soon as their signal letters have been received. 3. Extention of recognition procedure in this way must increase risk of enemy raiders (a) becoming aware of detail

/of ...

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

British signal letters alloted to Allied Ships. (contd.)

of the procedure, (b) obtaining secret call sign of a ship sunk and then simulating recognition procedure with that ship's letters. Merchants ship recognition procedure must therefore be treated as only one of the factors in determining whether ships sighted are friendly or hostile. (D.S.D. 2048A/27 to A Mge. Home & Abroad).

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

French Shipping. Passing Gibraltar 25/12. (D.O.R., 27/12).

Tunisia, intelligence. My 1016/26. Same source reports 5117 troops from French Syria arrived up to 22/12 destination Algeria and Morocco. Supplies petrol in Tunisia estimate 1/12, (corrupt group) as follows:-
In tons, civilian, zero; Military, 2,000;
aviation, civilian, 200; military, 1,000;
gas oil 1,000; fuel oil, 20; alcohol 1,000.
Air Force total 100 planes which could not operate more than 4 days. Strength of Army estimated at 15,000 with little mechanisation.
(F.O.C.N.A., 0018A/27 to C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta)

ACTIVE. Parted company from Convoy at 1800N/26 in 043° 20' N., 023° 03' W. Convoy course and speed 182° 13.2 knots. My E.T.A. 1300A/29.
(ACTIVE, 0820N/27 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Calls at Gibraltar, censorship. My 0920/18 para. 2. Instructions to search for correspondence at Gibraltar applies only to outward voyage in view of instructions to S.N.Os. of ships in last sentence of para 2.
2. On homeward journey therefore ships should only stop off Gibraltar to disembark Naval and Military parties. (A.C.N.S. (F) 0924A/27 to F.O.C.N.A.)

O.24 My 1038A/22. Cancel sailing of Netherlands S/M O.24. C. in C. Med., and V.A. Malta pass to Capt. (S) 1 and Capt. (S) 10.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1008A/27 to C. in C. Med).

Convoy. Your 1313/22. 7 or 8 ships which will be sailed as a separate convoy to meet S.L.97.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1014A/27 to Admty).

A/C attack on Enemy Tanker. Your 1516A/26. Tanker was the one mentioned in a.m. 1224A/23. Vessel was attacked and damaged at 1047A/23 in 45° 16' N., 12° 17' W., and shadowed intermittently until she entered territorial waters in vicinity of Ortugueira. At 1443A/24 ship was attacked and hit amidships by aerial torpedo in 43° 44' N., 7° 52' W. At 1540 a bombing attack was made, near misses being obtained. When last seen ship appeared to be aground with after well deck partly submerged amidst a mass of oil. Crew were abandoning ship Tanker had air escort.
(D.O.D. H., 1114A/27 to F.O.C.N.A.)

/FARADAY...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. - Contd.

FARADAY. — Intend to sail FARADAY about 10 days hence subject to suitable conditions and after cranes have been secured by steel straps to hull. (F.O.C.N.A. 1350A/27 to Admty).

SALVONIA. — My 1611/11. Decision over SALVONIA still held up in Portuguese Foreign Office. Favourable reply unlikely. (N.A., Lisbon, 1629/27 to Admty).

French Shipping. — LIEUT. DE LA TOUR full, S. MAXIME laden, FOIJ (not listed) and BONIFACIO both full deck cargo barrels. Trawler AUGUST DENISE, motor Trawler TATIANA, escorted by armed trawler ESTAFETTE. Eastbound. (V.A.C.N.A., 1645A/27 to Admiralty., C. in C. Med).

French Ships Melilla. — H.M.Trawler reports three French Merchantmen entered Melilla at 2300/26. They were escorted by armed trawler and came from westward. Presumed this convoy was the one mentioned in my 2345/25. All ships were reported light. (S.O.(I) Gib., 1757A/27 to Admty).

EL CONDADO (Spanish). — Have sent in EL CONDADO under armed guard. E.T.A. 1700A/28. Propose escort until 0100/28 then return to Gibraltar by coastal route. (ALOUETTE, 2125A/27 to F.O.C.N.A.)

South Atlantic.

DEVONSHIRE. — Departure 26/12 DEVONSHIRE for patrol H.33. (S.O.(I) Freetown, 0137Z/27 to Admty R.A.S.A.D.)

W.S.12 Z.B. — My 1552/26. Fuel Supplied and Bunkers on sailing. (S.S.T.O. Durban, 0752X/27.

D.M.1. — Convoy D.M.1 sailed24/12 for Port T.
(1) Ships AORANGI, NARKUNDA, SUSSEX, ABBEKERK.
Personnel on board and Destinations.
E.T.A. Port T 1100Z/4/1.
(S.S.T.O. Durban, 0930Z/27 to S.S.T.O. Singapore)

/INDUSTRIA...

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - Contd.

INDUSTRIA.	Overdue shipping. British Ship INDUSTRIA due Capetown 24/12 from Freetown not arrived. (S.O.(I) Capetown, 1006B/27 to Admty, C. in C. S.A.)
PERSEE.	My 2141/13/12. French Ship PERSEE ex PIERRE L.D. was still at Saigon on 10/12. (C. in C. S.A., 1109Z/27 to S.A. Stn).
Lourenco Marques.	Have you replied to B.A.D. Washington's 1615/20? (C. in C. S.A., 1124Z/27 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown)
OSKAWA.	Your 1714A/26. OSKAWA arrived Sarate 23/12. (S.O.(I) Montevideo, 1301Z/27 to Admty).
Vesca system at ports abroad.	Reply to A.M.1710A/25/12. (C. in C. S.A., 1325Z/27 to Admty).
Lourenco Marques.	B.A.Ds. 1615/20. There is no objection to California Texas Oil Company making the necessary bunkering arrangements at Lourenco Marques. Request your urgent remarks on para II (a) and (b) (A.C.N.S. (T), 1326A/27 to C. in C. S.A., C. in C. E.I.)
Appreciation Defence of Falklands.	Admty. 0107A/26 (N.T. in W.D.) Appreciation of present situation. My object is defence of trade and although there are no known raiders in South Atlantic I consider that with Japan in the war they are likely to appear again soon and certainly after Rio de Janeiro conference. I therefore do not consider that my ships should remain long off trade routes. 2. While agreeing that threatened attack on Falkland Is. is probably intended to influence the Rio conference, recent Japanese successes and desire to exploit them may indicate greater possibilities of such attack than was suggested in Admty. 2006A/7/10. As the attack has been announced, if attempted it is likely to be made with sufficient naval strength to deal with such British naval Forces as are known to be available and therefore I feel I cannot count on deterrent effect of ships of S.A.D. showing themselves off Patagonia and Terra del Fuego. While deprecating locking up of naval forces in defence of their base, if there is any real threat to Falkland Is. and if, as believe, their loss would be a disaster, sufficient forces should be made available to counter such threat while it lasts. I therefore strongly urge immediate reinforcement of S.A.D. by not less than 1 (one)

/8 inch...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

Appreciation Defence of Falklands. contd.

8 inch cruiser and if possible, submarine, at least until decisions of Rio conference are known.
4. Reinforcements, the deterrent effect of showing ships of S.A.D. S.A. Station must be tried. Under all circumstances I consider it inadvisable to maintain a small force of this nature for long at Falkland Is, and prefer that ships should return to trade route where they can be more usefully employed as soon as their presence has been sufficiently advertised.
5. Propose ASTURIAS should proceed Falkland Is. now and BULOLO after fuelling at Buenos Aires on 29/30/12.
Unless you consider BIRMINGHAM should go there now I propose to proceed Falkland Is. in BIRMINGHAM after my conference with Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro on 30/12.
(R.A.S.A.D. 1731Z/27 to C. in C. S.A.)

Mediterranean.

KETTY

Greek schooner, arrived Tobruk 19/12 with enemy cargo and was taken in prize.
(D.O.R. 27/12.)

Operation M.F.1

Your 1124B/26. Expect position at 1700B/27 33.56 N. 19.46 E.
(V.A. Malta 0745B/27 to 7 D.F., C. in C. Med. 201 Group.)
Hunting submarine off Tobruk.
(KIPLING 0909/27 to C. in C. Med.)
Following received (begins) Advance H.Q. 201 group repeated 234 Wing, CARLISLE, from 201 Naval Co-operation Group, A.114 27/12. Estimated P. C. and S. at 0800 now 032° 41' N. 025° 50' E. 13 knots, same course. T.O.O. 0820/27 (Ends)
(R.A. Alexandria 0910B/27 to CARLISLE.)
My 1402B/24 (N.T.in W.D.) Force B. is to R/V with M.E.8 in 033° 30' N. 023° 00' E. at 0700B/28. Force D. is to return Malta, R/Ving with Force B at discretion of R.A.7th C.S.
(C. in C. Med. 1055B/27 to R.A.7th C.S., Capt.(D) 7th D.F., V.A. Malta, R.A. Alexandria, S.O. Force I., Capt. (S) 1st S.F., KIPLING, 201 Naval Co-operation Group, Air H.Q. W.D.)

/Following ...

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Operation M.F.1 contd.

Following received (begins) 201 Advance H.Q. rep. C. in C. Med, CARLISLE, from 201 Group A.120 27/12 R/V of Force B now 033° 30' N. 023° 00' E. at 0700, D.3. Request you make provision fighter cover today. Request A S V Swordfish be given forces estimated movements. T.O.O. 1100/27.
(R.A. Alexandria 1205B/27 to CARLISLE.)
Following from Group 201 begins. Advance H.Q. 201 GREBE repeated 55 Sqn., C. in C. Med., R.A. Alexandria, S.O. Force I F.O.7th C.S. from 201 Naval Co-operation Group. A.135 27/12 Swordfish from Tobruk be in 032° 40' N. 025° 38' E. at 1730/28. Sweep 032° 20' N. 027° 20' E. land at landing ground 17. Swordfish from Dekhalia proceed during daylight to landing ground 17. Be in 032° 20' N. 027° 12' E. at 2330/28. Sweep 032° 00' N. 029° 00' E., land at Burg el Arab. T.O.O.1840/27.
(Group 201 1940B/27 to Med. Fleet.)
A.133/27. Following air co-operation 28th. Repetition my dusk search 27th in A.M./28. Fighter cover as from dawn if possible till dark. Inner A/S patrol from dawn till 1130 by Albacore to be relieved by Sunderland if possible. A.S.V sweep at night by Swordfish over convoy track. T.O.O. 1805/27.
(201 Group 1945B/27 to Med. Fleet.)

TRUANT
TRUSTY
for Far East.

Your 1131B/25. A proportion of spare crew and repair parties should be detached for these vessels. Crews of 2 submarines which are being delivered to Turkey in January and February will return to Alexandria after delivery of S/Ms and augment your spare crews. Depot ship allowance of spares referred to and special stores should also be transferred with S/Ms.
(F.O.S., 1034A/27 to Capt. S.1.)

APHIS.

Your 0947B/27 (N.T.in W.R.) Sailing APHIS 1130/27 through 032° 40' N. 023° 20' E. thence through 032°. 20' N. 024° 00' E. E.T.A. Tobruk 2030/27.
(N.O.I.C. Derna, 1047B/27 to S.O. Force I.)

C.M.24.

Arrived Suez Dec. 26th 27th.
(P.S.T.O. Egypt 1100B/27 to D. of S.T.)

Movements.

Arrival 26/12 HYACINTH, departure 26/12 TRUSTY, NAPIER, NIZAM, MAORI, CARLISLE, TRIUMPH, ISAAC SWEERS. Arrival 27/12 TORBAY, ISAAC SWEERS.
(S.O.I. Alexandria 1154B/27 to Admty. etc.)

/PHENIX ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - contd.

PHENIX
VILJA.

Signal Officer for I.P.C. From Haifa (Begins) PHENIX while in process of sailing on 24/12 was damaged by an explosion and was burned out and sank. VILJA came into contact with PHENIX and took fire but cargo intact. VILJA remains in port. (Ends)
(N.O.I.C. Palestine, 1251C/27.)

APHIS
A/C attack.

Following has been read. Am being attacked by enemy aircraft 196 33° N., 23° E., 16.
(APHIS, 1325/27 to WITHERINGTON.)

LEGION
A/C attacks.

Following has been read. Am being attacked by enemy aircraft.
(LEGION, 1410/27.)
My 1410, position 32° 05' N. 24° 30' E.
4 torpedo bombers.
(LEGION 1412/27.)
Enemy driven off. No damage.
(LEGION, 1422/27.)
Am being attacked by enemy aircraft 32° 5' N. 24° 30' E.
(LEGION 1440/27 to WITHERINGTON.)
4 Torpedo bombers approaching your position.
(KIPLING 1440/27 to PEONY.)
My 1440, 4 torpedo bombers steering 0900.
(LEGION 1446/27 to Alex. Port Wave.)
4 Torpedo bombers 180° 7 miles position 032° 12' 024° 29'.
(LEGION 1510/27.)

Enemy Units.

Aircraft R/C shows 4 fast merchant ships with 3 escorts leaving Gulf of Athens southbound at 1530B/27 probably for Suda Bay.
(Capt. S.1, 1551B/27 to OSIRIS.)

Mines,
Pylos Is.

TORBAY confirmed presence of mines from close south of Pylos Islands to lat. 036° 50'. Point of arrival and departure of all shipping including destroyers appears to be 036° 50' 021° 40', ships hugging coast between this point and harbour entrance.
(Capt. S.1, 1557B/27 to THUNDERBOLT.)

/ISAAC SWEERS ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - contd.

ISAAC SWEERS defects.

Admiralty is informed by Netherlands authorities that ISAAC SWEERS has following defects. 2. Ship is required in Far East and must be fit for service before proceeding. 3. As modifications will take approx. 5 months in U.K. and longer elsewhere, request your remarks as to possibility of elimination of boiler trouble by local labour, or by using a mixture of fuel. 4. If this is possible could longitudinals be repaired at Alexandria? 5. Hand control of Bofors must be accepted if ship does not return to U.K.
(D.O.D.(F) 1611A/27 to C. in C. Med.)

Malta Air Report.

26th 1401 hrs. 45 fighters escorting R/C aircraft crossed coast great height. Hurricanes up, 1 destroyed, pilot safe.
Night 26/27. 4 alerts 1615 to 0039 hours for approx. 14 enemy aircraft, bombs land, slight civilian damage, no interceptions. 2 Blenheims attacked 2 1500 ton M/Vs Zuara, 1730 hours. Direct hit 1500 tons M/V which blew up terrific explosion, possible damage to Mole. 1 Albacore as diversion for 3 others which laid 3 mines outside harbour dropped bombs 1950 hours on Stores Zuara result unobserved. Wellingtons successful attack shipping Tripoli Harbour 1718 to 2020 hours, scoring 2 hits 1 near miss on shipping. Large fire Spanish Fort area.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1655/27.)
Part 2 C.S.R. Malta 27/12/41.
27th. 5 Alerts. 0622 and 0732 hours, 2 Fighters Sweeps each 12 Aircraft. 0909 hours 20 Me.109s escorting 3 JU.88s, bombs land, no damage. Hurricanes intercepted, 1 JU.88 destroyed, 1 Me probable. 1250 hours 20 Fighters crossed Coast and withdrew. 1417 hours 9 Aircraft approached did not cross coast.
(H.Q. Malta, 1656/27.)

British Prisoners, Athens.

Reported there are 18 to 20 prisoners of War ex British Submarines in Averoff Prison, Athens. Date of capture and name of Submarine unknown. Has Admiralty any confirmation?
(C. in C. Med., 1753B/27 to Admty.)

/Massawa ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - contd.

Massawa.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No.220. Ref. Telegram No.151 Susan from Prime Minister to General Auchinleck, para.2 (b). Please state if Massawa is best port for loading Hurricanes and handling carrier.
(W.O. 1915/27 to C. in C. M.E., C. in C. Med.)

Benghazi, port situation.

Aircraft R/C at 1100. 2 more mines exploded. No positive evidence of any mines inside harbour. Weather severely impeding R/C. First boat to be used filled and abandoned. Still no power boat. Some part of super-imposed wreck disappeared. Possibilities exist of opening up of passage in port. Native labour reluctant to come forward resulting from threats by enemy.
(N.O.I.C. Benghazi 1925B/27 to S.O. Force I.(R) N.L.O. 8th Army C. in C. Med., A.S. Alexandria.)

Benghazi Minesweeping.

My 1836/24 and 1205/21. Sweeping of northern channel into Benghazi should commence at dawn 30th. R.A. Alexandria is requested to sail SIKH, HERO, HOTSPUR as escort to PRINCE BAUDOUIN to arrive Tobruk 0500/29. These Destroyers are then to act under orders of S.O. Force I to provide cover for the M/S Flotillas. Destroyers are to keep outside 100 fathom lines. On arrival of M/S Flotillas at Benghazi Destroyers return to Alexandria. M/S Flotillas should sail from Tobruk covered by GRIFFIN and HASTY until SIKH, HERO and HOTSPUR overtake. 201 Group are requested to give this operation special priority for Fighter Protection when west of Tobruk. If Fighter Protection off Benghazi on 30th is not available operation will be postponed.
(C. in C. Med., 1935B/27.)

Tobruk Movements.

27/12 arrivals AVONDALE, PEONY, KIPLING, APHIS, B.D.V. BURGONET, ALISA, departures AVONDALE, PEONY, KIPLING, SVANA, THORGRIM, A.13, A.17, VOLO, GEBEL KEBIR.
(B.S.N.O. Tobruk 2359B/27 to Admty.)

MOST SECRET.

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27.12.1941.
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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

WAIRUNA. — Your 1905/24. Ship arrived Colombo 20 left 24 for Calcutta, due 30 ref. Fairmiss 280 and route signal 785.
(S.O.I. Colombo 0142Z/27 to Admty.).

W.S. 12 X. — Arrivals DORSETSHIRE with W.S. 12 X.
(S.O.I. Bombay 1152Z/27 to Admty. etc.).

R.N. Air Section for Mombasa. — Admty. 1136/8/11 and your 1544/25/11. Approved to transfer R.N. Air Section from Aden to Mombasa. Arrangements will be made to send out personnel to re-establish R.N. Air Section at Aden and to build up R.N. Air Section at Mombasa to the scale approved in Admty. 1136/8/11 plus 2 to 3 major inspections per month.
(Head of Air Branch 1434A/27 to C.in C. E.I.).

Rangoon Air Raid. — Sitrep 2.
Air raid on Rangoon on 25/12 by large number bombers with fighter escort. 17 certain, 4 possible destroyed, with prospect more being found later. No military, little civilian damage of importance caused. No military activities.
(C.in C. India 1630/27 to W.O.).
Sitrep 3. Verified Japanese air losses Rangoon 25/12 now ten bombers 10 fighters. Air alert 26/12 but no raid in morning.
(C.in C. India 1615/27 to W.O.).

China.

Malaya. — Your 0055Z/17. Following is present position and my appreciation.
2. In their effort to seize Singapore Japanese are engaged in a fight for strategic aerodromes hitherto confined Malaya but now extending to Borneo.
3. To combat this we must reinforce Malaya with troops to hold ground and with air to strike at enemy aerodromes. Philippine Islands are already a wasting asset and we must act quickly to prevent Malaya becoming one also.
4. Present arrangements for passage of reinforcements are:
A. Convoy B.M.9 A escorted through Sunda Straits to Singapore by HOBART, DRAGON, DURBAN, and 3

/destroyers...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Malaya -Contd.

destroyers with all available air cover and every assistance from Dutch. E.T.A. Singapore 3/1.
B. Convoy B.M.9 B escort DANAE, Netherlands Cruiser JAVA 3 destroyers similar air and possibly HOBART in addition. E.T.A. 7/1.
C. Convoy D.M.one escort as for A if HOBART is available. E.T.A. about 12/1.
D.. Future convoys from Indian ocean or Australia with similar escorts. E.T.A. unknown.
5. Escort of all foregoing is weak and could have been strengthened if Americans had co-operated. Time apparently does not permit awaiting American co-operation. It is a race against Japanese seizing and using aerodromes in S.W. Borneo.
6. Reference para. 4 (C) and (D). By the time these convoys approach Sunda it may be necessary to consider diverting them to Java. This particularly applies to aircraft in D.M. one.
7. I consider the material and psychological effect of the arrival of these immediate reinforcements in Malaya justifies the risks run. (C.in C. E.F. 0336Z/27 to Admty. Rep. C.in C. F.E. C.in C. E.I. B.A.D.Washington. A.C.N.B.).

HOBART

Your 1024Z/26. Grateful for prompt response. If HOBART leaves Singapore (?cover) of B.M.9A E.T.A Fremantle 8/1. If she leaves after arrival of D.M.1 she could still meet KANIMBLA convoy well South of Sunda. My 0336Z/27 to Admiralty will explain position here. (C.in C. E.F. 0433Z/27, Navy Office Melbourne, (R) Admty.).

Zigzagging.

Your 1858/24 (In what areas are independently routed merchant ships required to zig zag). In all areas when in open water during daylight and moonlight hours. (Cdre, Malaya 0704Z/27 to Admty.).

America and West Indies.

H.X.167.

Task Unit 4.1.5 designated escort, MAYO (S.O.) SIMPSON, BABBITT, SCHENCK, LEARY. (Opnav 0740/27 to Admty.).

/ ALCANTARA...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. -Contd.

ALCANTARA. N.S.H.Q. 1559/23 and your 1609/23.
Is it approved for ship to proceed via Halifax?
(B.A.R.M. 1016R/27 to Admty.).

Dispositions. Estimated positions of H.M. and Allied ships at 1800 G.M.T./27.

Ship.	Positions	Course	Speed.
MARON	38°N 43°W	Patrol	Blank.
ALBATROSS	10°N 38°W	273°	14.
CANTON) CILICIA)	05°N 35°W	Patrol	Blank.
DEVONSHIRE	07°N 21°W	261°	15.
ASTURIAS	18°S 35°W	Patrol	Blank.
Convoy C.T.8) BERGENSFJORD) MORETON BAY ROCKINGHAM BEVERLEY.	50°N 36°W	237°	14.
ADELAIDE	29°S 155°E	South	14 knots.

(D.O.D.(F) 1022Z/27 to Opnav, (R) Spenavo).
Your 1041/25. No objection to forces being operated as desired by C.N.O.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1239A/27 to B.A.D.).
Add to my 1022Z/27 MARSDALE 43°N. 57°W. 112° 12 knots. (D.O.D.(F) 1528Z/27 to Opnav (R) Spenavo).

Panama British patrols. Minister Panama's telegram No. 375 to F.O. repeated to Washington No. 178. Consider it most important that British Naval Patrols should be allowed into Panamanian territory when one of H.M.Ship's is present.
(C.in C. A.W,I. 11240/27 to Admty. (R) B.A.D.).

Washington report. Washops 17.
(1) Philippine Islands 25/12. U.S. forces have occupied fresh delaying positions in Lingayen Sector B/17's have been moved to bases in Australia and Netherlands E.I. as heavy bombing operations are no longer possible from Luzon. R/C is being provided by Pursuit-planes.
(2) N.E.I. A report from U.S. Military observer at Bandoeng dated 25/12 states:-
(1) On 23/12 2 Japanese convoys each approx. 3 transports with 2 cruisers or destroyers were sighted. Landing is expected at Menado (Celebes) and Ternate (N.W. New Guinea).(2) N.E.I. aircraft formerly based Borneo are now operating in Sumatra.
(3) U.S. Pacific Coast S.S. ABSAROKA was hit by a torpedo p.m./24 in approx. 034° N. 118° W. though badly damaged she has reached San Pedro under tow. (J.S.M. Washington 1409R/27 to Admty. etc.).

/ROLFSBORG....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 27.12.1941. Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. -Contd.

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/ROLFSBORG....

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.-Contd.

ROLFSBORG. Your 1608/30 ROLFSBORG has not arrived. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1416Z/27 to Admty.).

VINCENT FIRETHORN. My 1123R/13. U.S. VINCENT due Balboa 23/12 not arrived. Panamanian FIRETHORN also 3 days overdue. (S.O.I. Jamaica 1551R/27 to Admty.). FIRETHORN arrived, see 0902R/28 VINCENT, 6210 tons, which left Sydney N.S. on 21/11, made a raider distress signal on 12/12 in 22.41 S. 118.19 W. (D.S. 846).

ROXBOROUGH. Has sailed from Iceland E.T.A. St. Johns 31/12. E.T.A. Charleston 2000 Zone 5 6/1. (F.O.N.F. 1636Z/27 to B.A.R.M.). Weather report. My position at 1700 G.M.T. 61.22 N. 31.34 W. (ROXBOROUGH 1700Z/27).

AUSONIA CIRCASSIA. Request Admty. intentions re sending AUSONIA to A.W.I. Station under altered circumstances. Unless required elsewhere I suggest that AUSONIA should relieve CIRCASSIA in order that latter may proceed to U.K. to give leave and refit. Last leave and refit in U.K. Feb.1941. (C.in C. A.W.I. 1702Q/27 to Admty.).

TURECAMO BOYS. Your 1519Z/6. Have you any further news of American Tug TURECAMO BOYS? (D.T.D. 17C4A/27 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

BATTLEFORD. Proceeding St. Johns N.F. with damaged dome. (BATTLEFORD 1710Z/27 to C.C.N.F. (R) C.O.A.C. ST. LAURENT.). P.C. and S 052° 10' N. 040° 00' W. 240° 8 visibility cable lost contact with convoy. (BATTLEFORD 2330Z/27 to ST. LAURENT).

ROODE ZEE towing operation. My 2308A/15 and your 0932Q/23. It is not now intended to proceed with this project. (A.C.N.S.(T) 2047A/27 to C.in C. A.W.I.) Refers to towage by ROODE ZEE only see 1021A/1/1.

Shipping control. Present position. Suggestion re staff. (B.A.D. 2129R/27) See Lion Copy. Reply. Admty. 1411A/29.

ALYSSE MIMOSA. Has orders to proceed with S.C.62 to prudent limit of endurance and thence direct to Clyde to carry out crew adjustment and to give leave. Request ~~she~~ may be sailed to return to N.E.F. with O.N.S. about 14 days. (C.C.N.F. 2135Z/27 to C.in C. W.A.).

/Air....

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. -Contd.

Air Patrol. Cancel my 1600/19. Six U.S. planes Task Unit 3.3.1 stationed Natal now patrolling area between Natal and Sao Pauls Rock. (Opnav 2203X/27 to Admty.).

Australia and New Zealand.

TEVIOT BANK Your 1034Z/26 TEVIOT BANK cannot be used on Australia Station. (A.C.N.B. 0949Z/27 to C.in C. E.F.).

Zigzagging. Your 1858A/24. Zigzag area Australia Station. (a) Within 200 miles of east and south coast from Cape York Queensland to Kangaroo Island South Australia. (b) Within 200 miles of N.W. coast from Port Darwin to 020° south (c) Arafura Sea. (A.C.N.B. 1151Z/27 to Admty.).

M/S and A/S vessels. Outbreak of war with Japan finds New Zealand Naval Forces with only 10 minesweepers in commission, of which 2 are fitted with ?asdics and 4 more will be fitted shortly. In addition there are 5 LL sweepers nearing completion which is held up until cables patterns 6181A (Demand 757) arrive from U.K.
(2) All recent appreciations emphasise probability of minelaying and sporadic S/M activity. Consequently additional vessels are urgently required particularly in view of increasing amount of shipping passing through New Zealand.
(3) Deficiencies in local defence vessels are (1) Port M/S vessels, 13. (2) Port A/S vessels, 15 vessels and 12 M.M/LS. (3) Ocean A/S escorts for convoys 7. These numbers make no allowances for casualties.
(4) In addition 2 M/S A/S vessels and 2 LL sweepers are required for Fiji.
(5) To meet these deficiencies 7 vessels from U.K. are expected by March 1942. Projected building in new Zealand consists of 9 port M/S A/S vessels of the Castle Trawler type due for completion in about 12 months time and 12 Fairmile motor launches which may be completed in 1942 if prefabricated parts are received from U.K.
(6) The 7 vessels referred to in para. 5 must be used as ocean escorts until such time as

/corvettes....

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

M/S and A/S Vessels. -Contd.	corvettes may become available at the expense of the defence of the ports. (7) This situation was raised previously in my 1134M/29/9. (N.Z.N.B. 1501M/27 to Admty.).
Shipping routes.	Q.F.A.72. Cancel Q.F.A. 28. All ships bound for Ports in Spencer and St. Vincent Gulfs are to be routed via Backstairs passage. Small Coastal vessels may be exempted from this restriction at discretion of D.N.O. Adelaide (S.A.). Ships are to pass through Backstairs passage only during daylight. Attention is called to W.F.50. (A.C.N.B. 1654Z/27 to all concerned with Q.F.A. messages).

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U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Off Tobruk. KIPLING, 0909/27.
See Mediterranean.

Estimated approx. positions of U-Boats.
(D.D.I.C., 1251A/27, 1253A/27.)

Submarines Attacked.

By HOTSPUR, HASTY. Congratulations on the destruction of a German U-Boat on 23/12/1941.
(A.C.N.S.(T), 1759A/27 to HOTSPUR, HASTY.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

C.S.10 in KENYA, with ONSLOW, OFFA, ORIBI, CHIDDINGFOLD, PRINCE CHARLES, and PRINCE LEOPOLD (Force "P") arrived at Scapa at 1549 today having successfully completed yesterday Operation "Archery". C.S.10 reports that an enemy Battery and an industrial target were destroyed, together with 5 M/Vs. which had been beached by their crews, 2 Armed Trawlers, and one Armed Tug. Heavy German casualties were inflicted and at least 80 German prisoners were brought back. The naval casualties were light and military casualties not heavy in spite of some stiff street fighting. Our own ships suffered only very minor damage from gunfire and near-miss bombs, although they were attacked at intervals from 1000 yesterday until after dark by small A/C formations.

C.S.2 in ARETHUSA reports that Force "J" is withdrawing tonight from Operation "Anklet".

Attempts to carry out a photographic R/C of Brest today have failed, and F.O.C.N.A. and F.O. Force H have been informed by Admiralty that the possibility of GNEISENAU attempting the passage of the Straits of Gibraltar cannot be ruled out.

The Swedish authorities have been informed that, up to about the middle of February, no more than two Swedish M/Vs may arrive at the Faeroes in any one day.

The S/M H.31 has not arrived at her R/V on return from the Biscay Patrol and must now be presumed lost.

Enemy Air Activity.

The British J.B. PADDON, 570 tons, was bombed at 1710 yesterday off Flamborough Head and abandoned. All her crew were saved.

At 1307 today Thorshaven and Skaale in the Faeroes were attacked by A/C.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining.

In the Thames Estuary 3 Magnetic and 2 S.A. Mines were detonated by Sweepers yesterday, and one S.A. Mine today.

South Atlantic.

Convoy Diversion. The whole of Convoy W.S.14 D (4 troopships and 1 M.T. ship) is to be diverted to Malaya, sailing from Durban as D.M.2.

Aircraft, Falklands. C. in C. S.A. desires to have some air R/C available for the Falklands, and makes certain proposals for obtaining float-planes.

Mediterranean.

Operation M.F.1. PEONY reported at 0300 that she believed one ship in Convoy M.E.8 had been torpedoed. KIPLING later reported this as VOLO, 1587 tons.
At 0450 KIPLING sank the German submarine U.75 in 31° 50' N., 26° 40' E., and took 2 officers and 19 ratings prisoners; 9 more ratings were picked up by LEGION.

C.S.7 reported at 0905 that he was being bombed in 33° 7' N., 23° 47' E. Further attacks were made at 0908, 0957 and 1518, but no hits were made In the last attack, one enemy was shot down by AJAX and CARLISLE, and we lost one Martlet.

Libya and Western Desert. R.A.F., H.Q. M.E., states that small coastal vessels in Ageila - Jedabya Area are apparently being used by the enemy to supply his troops in Jedabya area, petrol and stores being dropped close in shore for collection and delivery by M/T.

Albacore and Swordfish aircraft laid 7 mines outside Tripoli Harbour last night, while Wellingtons attacked shipping in the Harbour.

/Malta...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Malta. There were 7 alerts between 1740 and 0320 last night, and bombs dropped on sea and land caused only slight damage to officers' quarters at Luqa. 1 enemy bomber was shot down.

Red Sea. Italian GIOVE, scuttled at Main Quay, Massawa Island, in April, and salved in August, left for Aden today under tow.

A/S Vessels. 2nd Trawler Group should arrive shortly and 4 A/S whalers, now converting in South Africa, in April. Admty regret demands in other theatres of war prevent improvement on these numbers at present. Corvettes with their long endurance cannot be spared from ocean routes.

China.

Malaya. Convoys. Shortage of escorts makes it essential that Convoys B.M.10 and 11, U.M.1 and 2, and subsequent convoys should not arrive Sunda Strait at less than about 5 days interval unless ocean escort of U.M.1 and 2 accompany them to Singapore. It may thus be necessary to decide precedence of these convoys, and C. in C. Far East is being consulted. S.S.1. containing stores, must proceed unescorted.

Philippines. Japanese are steadily bringing up reinforcements from transports at Lingayen and Atimonan.

America & West Indies.

Trinidad. Admty are concerned about the safety from S/M attack of the increased number of ships using Port of Spain, Trinidad, and desire to approach U.S. authorities to see if reliance could be placed on their assistance in the event of a sudden necessity. M.L. flotillas fitted with asdics are due to arrive about April and June.

/St. Pierre...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
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SITUATION REPORT.

America & West Indies. - Contd.

St. Pierre. Adm. Muselier informed the Admty today that the restrictions against entering the waters of St. Pierre and Miquelon do not apply to ships of the R.N.

Australia.

HOBART. A.C.N.B. concur in C. in C. E.F's request for the retention of HOBART to escort D.M.1. Convoy M.S.1 will be delayed to allow HOBART to join convoy in the Leeuwin Area.

MOST SECRET

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

ORUC REIS. Further trials carried out yesterday with the Turkish Submarine ORUC REIS which were attended by a representative of Vickers have confirmed reports previously received that, while in every other respect the performance of the submarine has proved excellent, she has tendencies which make her liable to get out of control at submerged speeds exceeding 6 knots.
2. Action is therefore necessary to improve the submerged performance of this class and I have therefore directed that ORUC REIS is not to sail in accordance with Admiralty 0054A/3/12. Admiralty 1823A/2/12 also refers.
(F.O.S., 1058A/28 to Admty.)

Japanese A/S methods. Your 0039A/27 and Captain (S) 1, 1204B/26.
It must be assumed that Japanese A/S hunting craft have all information on A/S tactics and methods of A/S detection employed by Germany and Italy.
2. It is probable therefore that they use multi-hydrophone and echo detection. Transmission between approx. 8 and 15 k/cs have been used by German and Italian vessels. It is believed that super-sonic transmission have been intercepted in the neighbourhood of Japanese ships and trawlers.
3. Japanese may also use small charges for detection as reported by our submarines on several occasions in home waters and Mediterranean.
4. No information is available on R.D.F. German U-Boats are not so fitted so far as is known.
5. C. in C. Eastern Fleet is requested to supply any further information obtained as result of war experience.
(D.N.I., 1252A/28 to F.O.S.)

EAGLE. EAGLE's programme as submitted in No. 00191 of 9/12 is approved.
C. in C. W.A. is requested to sail ship for the Clyde when ready.
EAGLE is to be given 14 days working up in the Clyde area.
(A.C.N.S. H., 1615A/28.)

Swedish Shipping to Faroes. My 1250A/12.
Swedish authorities have been informed that (a) Admiralty are unable to accept any reduction in the 50 miles minimum interval between ships.
(b) It is essential outward and inward bound Swedish ships should arrive at the Faroes in daylight.

/(c) That ...

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Swedish Shipping to Faroes. (Contd.)

(c) That up to about the middle of February 1942 it will not be permissible for more than two Swedish ships to arrive at the Faroes on any one day.
(D.E.W.D., 1818A/28 to C. in C. H.F., A.C.O.S.)
My 1818/28. Swedish Legation reports your Boarding Officer told certain Swedish Control Officers that two hour intervals between ships is sufficient and that lighting arrangements could be made to facilitate arrivals after dark which would be preferable provided time of arrival given in advance.
2. Doubtless this is exaggeration but it is most important to give Swedes no encouragement but merely reply to any suggestion that you will forward it to Admiralty.
3. All Swedish troubles at Faroes are due to Germans not us.
(D.E.W.D., 1923A/28 to N.O.I.C. Faroes.)

C.A.M. Ships Radio Officer.

It has been decided to appoint one specially trained Radio Officer to each C.A.M. Ship for the purpose of operating and maintaining service R/T equipment. Arrangements.
(D.S.D., 2119A/28.)

Co-operation with Russia.

Return of Foreign Secretary.

My 1240C/25. New E.T.A. 1200A/29.
(KENT, 1936A/28 to Admty.)

Movements.

ILLUSTRIOUS.

(a) ILLUSTRIOUS escorted by BURZA leaves Clyde Boom 0630A/29 via swept channel to Q S 3010 thence by standard route to Bar L.V. S. of A. 24 knots E.T.A. 1700A/29. SAINT ALBANS joins escort at Q S 3010 at 0845A/29.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0928/28 to 13 and 82 Groups, H.Q.F.C.).
Intend sailing ILLUSTRIOUS escorted by BURZA passing Clyde Boom at 0630A/29 to R/V with ST. ALBANS from Londonderry in 237° Ailsa Craig 13 miles at 0845A/29 thence by standard route to Bar L.V. S. of A. 24 knots. E.T.A. 1700A/29.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0944A/28.)

LEWES.

Sailed 0930. E.T.A. Scapa 0900/30.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 0933/28.)

/BREDA ...

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements - Contd.

BREDA. Arrival 1145 BREDA only.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 1152/28.)

O.14. My 1221A/27. Ships sailed.
(Capt. S.9, 1541/28.)

ANTHONY. Intend to sail ANTHONY proceeding by swept channels to Greenock at 1600/1st. Speed 20 knots. E.T.A. 0900/3.
(F.O. Humber, 1807/28.)

Operations.

Denmark Strait Patrol. Unless other orders received intend to sail ANEMONE and ABELIA a.m./29th to relieve VERONICA and SWEETBRIAR after R.D.F. spares from BELLWORT who arrived today have been fitted to ABELIA. VERONICA to sail for Londonderry after fuelling Hvalfjord and transferring warm clothes to BELLWORT. Thereafter length of patrol to be as in F.V.C.1 Para.31. Exact time of departure and E.T.A. position 066° 26' N. 023° 11' W. will be signalled later.
(ANEMONE, 1000/28 to C.S.1.)
NORFOLK and 2 corvettes on patrol "White".
(A.C.I.C., 1610N/28.)

Operation "Anklet". Withdrawing night of 28th-29th.
(S.O. Force J., 1124A/28 to Admty.)

Operation "Archery". Force P requests Hoxa Gate 1550 today. Request hospital boat may be despatched on arrival for approx. (? 70 or 135) casualties.
(C.S.10, 1429A/28 to A.C.O.S.)
Force P arrives 1600/28. PRINCE CHARLES must have a buoy or secured berth on arrival.
(C.S.10, 1431A/28 to C. in C. H.F.)
Operation "Archery" successfully completed. Military battery demolished and industrial target destroyed. Heavy German casualties inflicted and at least 80 German personnel brought back. Naval casualties light, military casualties not heavy in view of very stiff opposition in street fighting. 2 Hampdens and 1 Blenheim aircraft known down, one crew saved 1 Hampden.
5 Merchant ships, beached by their crews, were destroyed: two armed trawlers and one armed tug sunk. Not possible to take prizes.

/Our ships ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation "Archery". (Contd.)

Our ships suffered very minor damage from gunfire and near missing bombs. Force was attacked at intervals from 1000 until after dark by small formation H.E.111's and J.U.88 usually supported by two M.E.109's.
(10 C.S., 1459A/28 to Admty.)
Scapa arrival C.S.10 in KENYA with ONSLOW, OFFA, ORIBI, CHIDDINGFOLD, PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE LEOPOLD.
(A.C.O.S., 1549/28.)

Channel Patrol.

3 A/S trawlers patrolling Q Z S 271, returning to St. Helens at dawn.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 1457A/28.)

British Air Activity.

Operation "Anklet".

Aircraft R/C for D.3 leaving base 0300/28.
(18 Group, 0045/28 to S.O. Force J.)
My A.730, 28th Dec. Liberator landed 1100A/28. Forced to return early by severe icing. Task not carried out.
(18 Group, 1420/28 to S.O. Force J.)

Enemy Air Activity.

Convoy F.S. 84.

Your 2354/27. Available evidence now indicates that your victim was undoubtedly enemy.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 0256/28 to LOWESTOFT.)

J.B.PADDON (British, 570 tons) bombed on 27/12.

Your 1003A/26. J.B. PADDON bombed and abandoned at 1710/27 in 53° 55' N. 0° 16' E. Crew all saved.
(N.O.I.C. Sunderland, 1245/28 to N.C.S.O. Gt. Yarmouth.)

Faroes bombed.

Help Thorshavn.
(Thorshavn W/T, 1307/28.)
Help Skaale.
(Thorshavn W/T, 1309/28.)

Mining.

Thames Estuary.

Three magnetic mines detonated at 0630/27, 0640/27, and 0643/27 respectively. Details.
(Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1009/28.)

/Two S.A. ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary. 28.12.1941. Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining - Contd.

Thames Estuary. (Contd.)	Two S.A. mines detonated at 0643/27. (Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1013/28.)	Details.
	One S.A. mine detonated at 1047/28. (Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1626/28.)	Details.
HENRIETTE (Mined 26/12)	My 1502A/26 and 2203A/26. Wreck located in 53° 32'31" N. 00° 08'22" E. (F.O. Humber, 1802/28.)	

Enemy Intelligence.

Brest.	A.M. 1856/27. Photographic R/C of Brest today has so far failed. The possibility of GNEISENAU attempting the passage of Straits of Gibraltar cannot be ruled out. (A.C.N.S. F., 1711A/28 to F.O.C.N.A., F.O. Force H.)
North Sea.	Ten vessels in 53° 8' N. 4° 35' E., course 030°. speed unknown. (A/C P.407 Sqdn., 1750/28 to North Coates.) 5 Merchant vessels 030° 53° N. 4° E. 5 miles. (A/C. J.4071, 1820/28 to Base.)

Navigational.

H.3 Buoy.	Commodore of F.N. 88 reports H.3 Lt. Buoy light unreliable at 1040/26. (N.C.S.O. Methil, 1224/28.)
Ice in Denmark Straits.	Heavy pack ice running W.N.W. in 060° 54' N. 023° 27' W. No loose ice between patrol position and ice. (VERONICA, 1601N/28 to C.S.1, SWEETBRIAR, Reptd. RENOWN, A.C.I.C., ANEMONE.) Air R/C of ice sailings from 28/12 report sighting Brash between 065° 50' N. 27° 30' W. and 066° 10' N. 027° 30' W. At latter position Brash considerably thicker but considered navigable for ships of medium size. (A.C.I.C., 1908N/28.)
Rosyth.	Port of Rosyth closed owing to low visibility. (C. in C. Rosyth, 2319/28.)

MOST SECRET

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28.12.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties and Defects.

EMPIRE MARLOWE (Lost propellor 19/12.)

Arrival EMPIRE MARLOWE in tow of FREEBOOTER escorted by SNOWDROP.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0135A/28.)
Please convey to the Master of EMPIRE MARLOWE and C.Os. of FREEBOOTER and SNOWDROP my congratulations on the safe arrival in harbour of EMPIRE MARLOWE.
(C. in C. W.A., 1012A/28.)

LA MELPOMENE.

Sheerness departure LA MELPOMENE at 0951.
(C. in C. Nore, 1042A/28 to F.O. Humber.)

LEWES.

My 0933/28. Owing to defect, LEWES returned to Plymouth.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 1150/28.)

M.L.171.

M.L.171 unable to sail owing to port engine being out of order.
(R.N.O. Shoreham, 1200/28.)

H. 31.

My 2338A/26 and 1837A/26. H.31 has not arrived and I regret that her loss must now be presumed.
(F.O.S., 1207A/28.)

SAPPHIRE.

My 1000/27. SAPPHIRE did not sail. Broken down.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich, 1256A/28.)

S O S.

Intercept at 1417 G.M.T. from unknown station.
Begins:- S O S. Ends.
Nothing further heard and signal too weak to obtain bearing.
(Wick Radio, 1422/28 to A.C.O.S.)

STOKE CITY.

My 1845A/26. Sailed.
(N.O.I.C. Faroes, 1601A/28 to A.C.O.S.)

WOOLSTON.

Have struck submerged object in 053° 03'36" N. 001° 32' E. Starboard shaft vibrating badly. Am proceeding on one engine.
(WOOLSTON, 1804A/28 to C. in C. Nore.)

MOST SECRET

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys.

Q.P. 4. Your 2235C/27. Sailing of MIRLO and Ocean Escort postponed 24 hours.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 0336C/28 to S.B.N.O. Archangel, EDINBURGH, C. in C. H.F., M/S.F.1, LEDA.)
Position at 1200C/28.
STALIN with 5 ships 065° 24' N. 038° 28' E.
LENIN with 7 ships in (?) channel between ice about 40 miles astern. It is hoped to effect junction of 2 portions in about 12 hours when complete to reach R/V in company with the 2 ice-breakers.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 1622VC/28.)
If severe ice conditions persist it will probably be necessary to bunker from ships in convoy LENIN and STALIN, whose consumption is 95 and 130 tons a day respectively during present operations. I have accordingly arranged that TREHNA bunkers STALIN with 300 tons and TREKIVE bunkers LENIN with 250 tons. This will leave both M/Vs with bunkers for 20 days steaming.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 2309C/28.)

S.C. 60. S.C. 60. Leave convoy forthwith and proceed to Iceland. When well clear of convoy, DAUPHIN and WETASKEWIN report situation.
(C. in C. W.A., 0916A/28 to DAUPHIN, WETASKEWIN, SPIKENHARD.)

P.Q. 7. Do you intend to sail remaining ships of P.Q. 7 in near future.
(C. in C. H.F., 1100A/28 to A.C.I.C., CUMBERLAND.)
Sailed BRITOMART and SALAMANDER in accordance with your 2215A/26th.
(CUMBERLAND, 1200N/28.)

P.Q. 7B. Your 1100A/(?28). Expect to sail P.Q. 7B on 31/12 using same route and R/V as for P.Q. 7.
(A.C.I.C., 1834N/28.)

C.T. 9. Convoy C.T.9 composed of MONTCALM and VOLENDAM carrying Naval and Air Force personnel for Halifax will leave U.K. on 7/1.
2. MONTCALM will leave Clyde on 7/1 and R/V with VOLENDAM who will leave Avonmouth on 6/1.
3. Speed of slowest ship 14 knots.
4. Admiralty will promulgate route.
5. C. in C. W.A. is requested to: (a) provide two destroyers to provide through A/S escort to Halifax. (b) to arrange sailing of ships to R/V as convenient.
6. Destroyers will return to U.K. as escort for N.A. 2 sailing approx. 23/1.
(D.O.D. H., 1931A/28.)

MOST SECRET.

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Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Suspicious Ship.

Transit aircraft from U.K. reports a large M/V 10,000/15,000 tons 10 miles N. of Cape Villano at 1110Z/28 course 220° speed 10 knots.
(ii) Possibly Spanish MAGALLANES 9700 tons arrived Bilbao 22/12.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1958A/28 to Admty.)

South Atlantic.

W.S.14.

Propose that SCYTHIA, ORONSAY, ANDES and CAMERON at present in W.S.14 should be turned round at Durban.
Following approximate numbers will thus require on carriage from Durban. Ships available for onward conveyance.
(D.S.T. 0104A/28 to F.S.T.O. Simonstown).

KENNET, MYRLAND.

Sailed 0900 G.M.T./28. S. of A. 8 knots, E.T.A. Capetown P.M./1/1.
(N.C.S.O. Walvis Bay, 1032Z/28 to Admty.)

A/C for Falklands.

Admty. 0107/26. Desired to have some air R/C available for Falkland Is. Would be grateful if Oiler BROOMDALE due to leave Trinidad about 4/1 could, provided she is not delayed, embark 1 Walrus Seafox or other float-plane complete with crew and maintenance ratings. 2. ALBATROSS is due Trinidad about 4/1 with 2 Walrus of 710 Sqn. with crews and maintenance ratings. Suggest one of these might be used for this service or to replace an aircraft provided from Trinidad if available. 3. If you concur request you issue necessary instructions to ALBATROSS.
(C. in C. S.A., 1317Z/28 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

Accra Convoys.

Admty. 1202A/28/11. Use of convoy system at Accra as suggested has not been put into force owing to:-
(a) Difficulty of providing adequate escorts for convoys.
(b) Delay which would be caused whilst forming up convoys at Lagos or elsewhere.
(c) Uneconomical use of the limited capacity of the Port.
2. Present system enables resources of the Port to be applied to one or two ships at a time which

/reduces ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

Accra Convoys. (contd.)

reduces the time for which any one ship is anchored off the Port. 3. 17th M.L. Flotilla based on Takoradi maintains a patrol off Accra when ships are there. Hudson Air Patrol is also now available. 4. With present reduced scale of S/M activity, position is satisfactory and maximum value is being obtained from the Port.
(C. in C. S.A., 1325Z/28, to Admty.)

MOOLTAN.

Sailed 26/12 in Convoy S.L.96. Service passengers. Naval personnel embarking included Rear Adm. S.S. Bonham Carter and Staff and Capt. W.H.Best D.S.T.O. and Staff.
(S.S.T.O. Freetown, 1505Z/28, to D. of S.T.)

EXMOOR, CROOME.

Sail EXMOOR and CROOME for Gibraltar A.M./29.
(C. in C. S.A., 1607Z/28 to N.O.I.C.Bathurst, Gambia).

VELOX, AMARANTHUS.

Following is a repetition of my 1801/28 (begins). N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada (San Miguel). Inform British Consul VELOX and AMARANTHUS will require 290 and 170 tons fuel respectively on 7/1. (Ends.)
(C. in C. S.A., 1803Z/28 to ROCHESTER, VELOX, AMARANTHUS F.O.C.N.A., Admty.)

Floating Dock.

C. in C. S.A's. 0952/26 D. of D's proposals dated 1/11/41 are in M.016302/41. Possibility of obtaining floating dock in India has been investigated by M. of W.T. and Foley informed Controller 5/12/41 that prospects were not promising. My report to Controller dated 21/12/41, refers. Presume M. Branch will reply to C. in C. S.A. (D. of D. Bath, 1806A/28 to Controller, etc.)

Convoy Conferences, Sierra Leone.

Your 2553A/26. (? 2353 intended, re C.O.W.A. escorts attending SL Convoy conferences at Sierra Leone).
I agree, but there are difficulties. Air passage between Bathurst and Freetown cannot be relied upon and to bring the S.O's ship to Freetown would seriously curtail time in harbour. If this curtailment of rest is acceptable arrangements will be made. (C. in C. S.A., 1835Z/28 to C. in C. W.A.) Additional sea time not acceptable:- see 1854/29).

CAMBRIA, Cables.

CAMBRIA has completed repairs to Freetown Ascension, Freetown Bathurst and Madeira St. Vincent 2 and 3 cables. Freetown Accra cable, understand interrupted close to Freetown is now being repaired.
(2) Following programme is intended (a) Leave Freetown 2/1 escorted by SURPRISE. (b) Repair

/Accra ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

CAMBRIA, Cables, (contd.)

Accra Lagos Cable. (c) Divert Libreville Kotonu cable into Lagos. (d) Repair Libreville Port Ellen Gentil cable. (e) Repair Port G Point Noire cable.
(3) Above should be completed 4th week in January. (C. in C. S.A., 2027Z/28 to Admty.)

W.S.14D.

Decided that whole of convoy W.S.14D is to be diverted to Malaya sailing from Durban as D.M.2.
(2) Ships are WARWICK CASTLE, EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA, CITY OF PRETORIA, TROILUS.
(3) S.S. MALANCHA (13½ kts.) sailed Freetown 27/12 also carries equipment and M.T. belonging to units in W.S.14D and should be included in convoy D.M.2 if sailing date from Durban is not delayed thereby. (A.C.N.S.(F) 2201A/28 to C. in C. S.A., C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I.)

Mediterranean.

Greek Ships raised.

Following Greek ships sunk during war operations in Greek waters are reported to have been raised, repaired and to be now in service again:-
AGALLIANI, 1656 tons; ARTEMIS PITTA, 1433 tons; CONSTANTINOS LOULOUDIS, 4697 tons; ELSI, 1433 tons; HOLLANDIA, 1759 tons; PETRAKIS NOMIKOS, tanker 7020 tons; POPI S., 2083 tons; TETI, 2747 tons. (D.S., 845).

Ship Torpedoed.

Ship in convoy believed torpedoed. (PEONY 0300/28, to KIPLING) Name, see 0911/28 1202/28.

U/B sunk by KIPLING.

Have sunk German S/M in position 031° 50' N. 026° 40' E. (KIPLING, 0455/28).
My 0455. Sunk U-boat was U.75. KIPLING has 2 officers and 19 ratings and LEGION 9 ratings prisoners of war. LEGION has recovered 3 survivors and 4 mail bags from sunk VOLO. Ref. LEGION's 1236/27 Electric charge was not fired. KIPLING and LEGION rejoining convoy. My P.C. and S. 031° 02' ?N. 026° 42' E. 120° 27 knots.
(KIPLING, 0911B/28 to C. in C. Med.)
U.75 sunk by KIPLING at 0450/28 in 031° 50' N. 026° 40' E. 2 officers and 28 ratings rescued by KIPLING and LEGION. At 0300/28, U 75 had sunk OBAYO (? VOLO) in convoy returning from Tobruk to Alexandria. (C. in C. Med. 1202B/28 to Admty.)
Return to Alexandria with all despatch (C. in C. Med. 1241B/28 to LEGION, KIPLING).

/GIOVE ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

CAMBRIA, Cables, (contd.)

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/GIOVE ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 28.12.1941. Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - contd.

GIOVE. (Italian). GIOVE left in tow of PAULINE MOLLER at 0425Z/28 E.T.A. Aden 3/1. (N.O.I.C. Messawa 0639Z/23 to S.N.O.R.S.)
Position 28/12 captured prize GIOVE sailed for Aden under tow.
(S.T.O., Massawa 0915Z/28 to D. of S.T.)

OSIRIS. Keep to Westward of 025° 30' forthwith until 0001B/31st. (Capt. S.1, 0701B/28 to OSIRIS).

C.S.7. A/C attack. Enemy aircraft bombing - Jumbo - 33° 7' N. 23° 47' E. (C.S.7. 0905/28 to 238 Wing H.Q.)
1 bomber, no hits. Shadowing.
(C.S.7. 0903/28 to Alex. C.C.O.)
Further attack, no hits. (C.S.7. 0957/28 to Alexandria W/T).

Tripoli Mines. R.A.F. H.Q. Med's. I.305 dated 26/12.
Position of mines laid Tripoli (Africa) by Swordfish and Albacores night of 25/26. Bearings and distances in cables from end North Mole.
068° 7½, 062° - 12, (?065°) - 7, 075° - 11, 040° -6
045° - 5½, 090° - 1¾.
(V.A.Malta, 1153B/28 to C. in C. Med.)

Air Report. Small coastal vessels reported in previous Opsums in Ageila-Jedabya Area apparently being used by enemy to supply his troops in Jedabya Area, petrol and stores being dropped close in shore for collection and delivery by M.T.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1156/28).

S/Ms. Your 2206B/27. Intend following dispositions:-

	leaves Malta P.M.	Area.
UNIQUE	29/12.	H North of line. Alice Maria di Leuca,
P.34	29/12.	J.036° 56' 015° 24' 174° 40 70.
URGE	30/12.	K.035° 25' 011° 10' 345° 30 60.
UPHOLDER	30/12.	L. 034° 55' 011° 37' 345° 30 60.

(Capt. S.10, 1159B/28 to Capt. S.1).

COETLOGON, French. Departure 27th for Sete.
(Barcelona, 1314/28, to M. of W.T.)

/C.S.7. ...

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

C.S.7.
A/C attack.

Attacked by 4 torpedo bombers position 018°
32° N., 25° E., 44. No hits, one enemy shot down,
one Martlet shot down. (C.S.7., 1518B/28 to
C. in C., Med.)
Join me forthwith. (C.S.7, 1532/28 to MAORI).

NEPTUNE,
KANDAHAR,
GALATEA.

Your 1210B/26. In accordance with request in your
letter 2287/427/P.O. of 23/11, arrangements have
been made to signal to you when losses of
H.M. Ships are announced. Loss of NEPTUNE and
KANDAHAR will be announced as soon as next of kin,
including those in New Zealand have been informed,
probably about 31/12, loss of GALATEA will be
announced a few days later.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1542A/28 to C. in C. Med.)

Tobruk,
Minesweeping.

Summary for week ending 27/12. Sunday 21st routine
sweep nothing to report. Monday 22nd routine sweep
nothing to report. Tuesday 23rd SVANA exploded
1 (blue) magnetic mine (probably Sammy) pulsing on
battery 150 yards from tail close to wreck of
MANZ. Wednesday 26th routine sweep nothing to
report. Thursday 25th routine sweep nothing to
report. Friday 26th routine sweep nothing to
report. Saturday 27th a.m. CALAMARA exploded 1 (red)
magnetic mine 149° 7.4 cables from Tobruk Point;
p.m. HAILSTORM exploded 1 (red) magnetic mine
142° 6 cables from Tobruk Point. BAGSHOT cut
1 moored mine in Q.B.C. 235 sank it by rifle fire.
(B.S.N.O. Tobruk., 1550B/28 to Admty.)

Malta Air
Report.

27th. 1557 hours 9 raiders, bombs land, 4 civilians
killed 1 injured 14 houses demolished, no
interceptions.
Night 27/28. 7 Alerts, 1740 to 0320 hours, total
10 enemy aircraft, bombs sea and land, slight
damage Officers' quarters Luqa, 1 enemy bomber
shot down in flames by Hurricane no survivors.
3 Albacores 4 Swordfish laid 7 mines outside
Tripoli Harbour. 11 mark 1C Wellingtons attacked
shipping Tripoli Harbour 2325 to 0215 hours.
(H.Q., R.A.F., Malta, 1731/28).

Benghazi
Minesweeping.

Intend BAGSHOT, ABERDARE, SOTRA, HAILSTORM sail
at 0430/29 through S position, thence 032° 20' N.
024° 00' E. to position 040° Ras Et Deflat 8 miles
at noon/29, thence through 033° 10' N. 023° 00' E.
to 033° 00' N. 020° 43' E. passing 4.5 miles
Ras Hilal 000° at 1845 to arrive 004° Benghazi
Light 27 miles at 0715/30 - speed 9 knots. From
this position sweep at 7 knots 180° to position
000° Mingar Es Seghir 3 miles and thence to
position 253° extra Light 2.3 cables. Fighter
protection required day 29th, A.M./30.
Code name Screw. (S.O. Force I. 1731B/28 to
C. in C. Med.)

/My ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Benghazi Minesweeping. (contd.)

My 1731/28. Proceed (? on arrival) Tobruk to overtake Minesweeping Flotilla and escort them till 0715/30. When sweep commences establish patrol to seaward until signal received that Flotilla has arrived Benghazi, then comply with C. in C. 1935/27. Destroyers are to keep outside 100 fathom line. Attention is called to QB.51 and QB.53. (S.O. Force I, 1845B/28 to SIKH, Repeated HERO, HOTSPUR, BAGSHOT).
Following received, addressed SIKH, HERO, Repeated S.O. Force I. P.C. and S. "Booty" at 2300 position S. 065° 6 knots, altering course to 245° at 0300. (Capt. D.2, 2334B/28).
Comply with C. in C. 1935/27 and S.O. Force I. 1731/28. S.O. Force I left in BAGSHOT 0430. (S.O. Force I, Tobruk, 0745B/29 to SIKH, HOTSPUR (R) BAGSHOT).

Escort Flotilla, Hunts.

Now desired to form an escort flotilla of Hunts under direct administration of R.A.D. Request Flotilla numbers may be allocated. (C. in C. Med., 1759B/28 to Admty.) Reply: 11th Flotilla allocated. (D.O.D.(F) 1810A/29).

A/S Vessels.

Your 1630/2 and 1245/3. Every consideration has been given to remedying your shortage of small A/S vessels. Corvettes with their long endurance cannot be spared from the ocean routes. 2nd Trawler Group should arrive shortly and four A/S Whalers now converting in South Africa should reach you in April. 2. Regret demands in other theatres of war prevent improvement on these numbers at present (V.C.N.S. 1807A/28 to C. in C. Med.)

Midget S/M's.

Your 1937B/21 and 0950B/27. Re trials of lethal range of a 5 pound charge. (3) Considered that 5 pound charges fired at short intervals are likely to be more effective than 10 pound charges fired at double the interval, but 10 pound charges should be used if there are indications that human torpedoes may be attacking. (4) 10 pound charges are unlikely to be effective against midget submarines as opposed to human torpedoes. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1929A/28 to C. in C. Med., F.O.C.N.A., V.A. Malta).

Enemy Units.

3 unknown bearing 150° 2 miles approx., true course 290°, position 353°, 32° N. 27° E., 10 miles based on fix within ½ hour of 1200. (Nore W/T 2139/28 from Call Sign GYX.6)

Oil Patch.

Your 2151 (N.T. in W.R.) Oil patch last seen bearing 230° approx. course 290° distance 5 miles. No further information. (NESTOR 2156/28 to C.S.7.)

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Rangoon Report.

(a) 20% of night conservancy staff are on duty and 1/6th of day staff.
(b) Rangoon Port. 2/3rds of port coolies, 1/5th of workshop coolies and great bulk of launch crews are back. 22 ships in port and labour can be found for urgent work. Night unloading will be carried out. (c) Railways. Services are tending to return to normal.
(Govr. Burma 0255/28 to S. of S.)

Dante.

Dante as bunkering port. Bunkering facilities will be used by Navy as soon as available. C. in C. E.I. will be responsible for replenishing stocks. Port will be administered by O.E.T.A. with help and advice of C. in C. E.I.
(G.O.C. in C.E. Africa 0805/28.)

Troops for Malaya.

My 0746/19. In view of your 0304/24 following ships will now be required to move 7000 troops Bombay to Malaya about 14/1:- CAPETOWN CASTLE, DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, EMPRESS OF JAPAN, EMPRESS OF ASIA. Request very early confirmation that these ships of W.S.12Z may be used for this move, as no other ships are available. Intend using JOHAN DE WITT and KOSCIUSZKO Bombay Karachi about 12/1 for approx. 1400 R.A.F. personnel ex W.S.12Z. Your 0349/19. Intend using JOHAN DE WITT and KOSCIUSZKO sailing from Bombay about 21/1 to Suez for these personnel plus an additional 400 reinforcements from India. INDRAPOERA will replace NEURALIA in B.P.313.
(P.S.T.O. India 0959Z/28 to D. of S.T.)
Reply D. of S.T. 0346A/29.

W.S.12X.

Request early reply to my 1020/23 expect to complete disembarkation all ships 2/1.
(P.S.T.O. India, 1015Z/28 to D.S.T.)

MAURITIUS DORSETSHIRE

My 1408/28 (defects MAURITIUS) If it is the policy for a cruiser to escort the U.S. Transport back to U.S.A. it is suggested that MAURITIUS should unertake this duty. In the absence of MAURITIUS I would ask if DORSETSHIRE might be allocated temporarily to my station.
(C. in C. E.I. 1410Z/28 to Admty. (R) C. in C. S.A.) (Address amended 0556Z/29.)

/Communiques ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies - contd.

Communiques

1. Agree you prepare and issue communiques locally. If possible issue at fixed times each day.
2. Communique should when required combine land and air information and such naval information as C. in C. East Indies agrees. Concert arrangement with O.C.221 Group.
(C. in C. India 2115/28 to G.O.C. Burma.)

Burma Situation.

No air activity. New attack being staged Bokpyin. Reliably reported Mehsai reinforced by 400 troops. Troops in Thai uniform. Labour situation Rangoon slightly improved.
(G.O.C. Burma, 2130/28 to W.O.)

Possible use of Gas.

1. No doubt you have considered possibility of Japanese using gas in attacks on large centres in Burma.
2. Suggest desirable to review defensive measures.
(W.O. 2200/28 to C. in C. India.)

A/A forces, Rangoon.

1. Suggest you consider immediate despatch of A/A regiments from Iraq to Rangoon. In principle any regiments sent from Iraq to Rangoon will be replaced in Iraq from U.K. in due course.
(W.O. 2200/28 to C. in C. India.)

China.

Malaya Situation

Sitrep No.18, 1630 hrs. G.M.T. 27/12.
Perak. Naval patrol vessel sank three small craft manned by enemy in vicinity Pangkor Island on 26/12.
Borneo. Resident Labuan reports enemy navy 96 aircraft machine gunned Labuan town this morning including European quarters and hospital.
Kuching. 250 small craft including 50 barges at Georgetown.
General. Enemy air activity 27/12 light.
(Adv. H.Q. Malaya 0240/28.)

/Troop ...

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
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FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - contd.

Troop Convoys.

Your 1916A/26. Situation regarding B M 9 A, B M 9 B and D M 1 are as described in my 0336Z/27. Shortage of escort makes it essential that convoys B M 10 and 11, U M 1 and 2 and subsequent convoys should not arrive Sunda Strait at less than about 5 days interval unless ocean escorts of U M 1 and 2 accompany them to Singapore. It may be necessary therefore to decide precedence of these convoys and C. in C. Far East is being consulted. S.S 1 containing stores must proceed unescorted.
(2) Escort will be as in my 0336Z/27. Am arranging for air patrol and search, air A/S patrol, fighter protection in Sunda Strait, Banka Strait and Rhio Strait (which is route selected) and air striking forces all of which are necessarily small owing to limited means and with further loss will become smaller still. Am also sweeping in Rhio Strait and Banka Strait.
(3) Regarding AQUITANIA see my 0411Z/27.
(C. in C. E.F. 0501Z/28 to Admty.)

Navigation.

Java Eastern portion Charts Nos. 1653C and 934. Sapudi Strait and Raas Straits are closed to shipping. Vessels entering Madura Strait from the Northward must keep East of Raas Siland.
(R.A. Malaya, 0711Z/28 to China Stn.)

JUPITER ENCOUNTER.

Singapore departures 28th JUPITER and ENCOUNTER for Batavia.
(S.O.I. Singapore 0943Z/28 to Admty.)

LE TRIOMPHANT.

N.Z.N.B. Wellington 2129M/26. Request you will instruct French Light Cruiser LE TRIOMPHANT to return to Noumea and operate in New Caledonia area until further orders.
(C. in C. E.F., 1021Z/28 to ? A.C.N.B. Admty. N.Z.N.B.)
Arrived Brisbane 0740Z/27, see Australia.

/Disposition ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 28.12.1941. Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - contd.

Disposition Far East area.

A. British
(1) DRAGON, DURBAN and VAMPIRE left Padang 28th.
(2) DANAE at Batavia leaves 29th.
(3) JUPITER and ENCOUNTER leave Singapore 28th for Batavia.
(4) ELECTRA, EXPRESS, STRONGHOLD, THANET and TENEDOS at Singapore.
(5) SCOUT at Sabang.
(6) Dutch S/Ms. K.17 overdue since 21st. O.20 due Singapore 29th, O.19 and O.12 at Singapore. K.11 on patrol North of Kuching. K.13 due Batabia with escort 29th.
B. Dutch
(1) Cruiser DE RUYTER, Destroyer and Minesweeper PIET HEIN, BANCKERT, south of Java, proceeding west Java Sea.
(2) K.10 on patrol south of Davho.
(3) Sloop SOEMBA in Rhio Archipelago.
(4) Coast defence vessel SOERABAJA, Destroyers KORTENAER, WITTE DE WITH at Sourabaya.
(5) Destroyer EVERTSEN on patrol Sunda Strait.
(6) Destroyer VAN NES escorting K.13 due Batavia 29th.
(7) Cruiser JAVA at Padang.
(8) K.14 K.15 and K.16 returning to Sourabaya via Carimata Strait.
C. U.S.A.
(1) Cruiser HOUSTON, Drs. WHIPPLE, ALDEN, EDSALL, GOLD STAR, OTUS and PECOS at Darwin.
(2) Seaplane Tender LANGLEY and Dr. PRESTON due to leave Sourabaya for Darwin 26th.
(3) Seaplane tender CHILDS and Aircraft tender HERON at Amboina.
(4) Trinity at Soemba.
(5) Crs: BOISE, MARBLEHEAD, S/M Tender HOLLAND, Dr. Tender BLACK HAWK, U.S. Drs. STEWART, EDWARDS, PARROTT, H.M.S. MENTOR U.S. Drs. JOHN D. FORD, ISABEL, U.S. Gunboats TULSA, ASHEVILLE, U.S. Minesweepers LARK, WHIPPOORWILL at Sourabaya.
(6) Other forces not known.
(C. in C. E.F., 1056Z/28 to Admty. etc.)

Japanese A/S methods.

Your 0039A/27 and Capt.(S) 1 1204B/26. It must be assumed that Japanese A/S hunting craft have all information on A/S tactics and methods of A/S detection employed by Germany and Italy. 2. Probable therefore that they use multi-hydrophone and echo detection. Transmissions between approx. 8 and 15 kcs. have been used by German and Italian vessels. It is belived that super-sonic transmissions have been intercepted in the neighbourhood of Japanese ships and trawlers. 3. Japanese may also use small charges for detection as reported by our submarines on several occasions in home waters and Mediterranean. 4. No information is available on R.D.F. German U-Boats are not so fitted so far as is known.

/5. ...

War Diary.

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Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Japanese A/S methods - contd.

5. C. in C. E.F. is requested to supply any further information obtained as result of war experience.
(D.N.I. 1252A/28 to F.O.S.(R) Cs. in C. Med., E.I., E.F. etc.)

Convoys.

Ref. C. in C. E.F. 0336/27 to Admiralty (HUSH distribution, N.T. in W.D.) I agree with opinion expressed in para.7. Risks must and will be accepted to get these convoys through but they will be greatly increased if in meantime our strength in fighter and R/C aircraft becomes seriously diminished.
(C. In C. Far East, 2206/28 to W.O.)

America and West Indies.

St. Pierre

Following received by Marine Department St. Johns N.F. from Free French Govt., St. Pierre. (Begins) For Immediate Publication effective today 27/12/1941 at 1730 (Atlantic?) Standard time. Access to territorial waters of St. Pierre and Miquelon is prohibited to all warships of any nationality except under special permission previously asked and granted. Flying over the Islands without previous permission is (also?) prohibited to all aeroplanes. All lighthouses (may be?) extinguished as from tonight. Signed, Vice-Admiral C. inC. of Free French. (Ends)
(C.C.N.F. 0054Z/28 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa (R) C.O.A.C. Halifax, Comdr. Task Force No.4.)
It is emphasized that restrictions against entering water of Saint Pierre and Miquelon does not apply to ships of R.N.
(Adm. Muselier 0140Z/28 to Admty.)

FIRETHORN (overdue)

My 1551R/27. FIRETHORN arrived.
(S.O.I. Jamaica, 0902R/28 to Admty. etc.)

M/V fire on Catalina.

Master of British ship LAGUNA reports at about 1030Z/11 in 58.25 N. 12.19 W. ship opened fire with machine gun on an aircraft which flew straight in from starboard bow at height of about 300 ft. in misty weather. Aircraft stated to have been hit, and altered course, and was then recognised as a Catalina.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1019Q/28 to Admty. (R) C. in C. W.A.)

/Dakar ...

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - contd.

Dakar Intelligence. Meter. Dakar 24/12 (B.2) ARIZONA and MORON arrived from southward with 1800 Sengalese and Malagony troops. CARBET, PLATON, SAINT BASILE, JAMAIQUE departed for southward.
(B.A.D., 1141R/28 to S.O.I. Freetown.)

ALCANTARA. Your 1016R/27. Approved for ALCANTARA to proceed Halifax to embark passengers after carrying out practices at Bermuda.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1206A/28 to B.A.R.M.)

Washington Report. Washops 18. (i) Philippine Islands. Desultory fighting reported in North Luzon (corrupt group) very heavy fighting in S.E. Japanese steadily bringing up reinforcements from transports at Lingayen and Atimonan.
(ii) Netherlands East Indies. 6 N.E.I. Dorniers were destroyed by Japanese air attack on Lake Tondang on 26/12. No Japanese are reported to have landed Menado or Ternate.
(J.S.M. Washington 1311R/28 to Admty. etc.)

BITTERSWEET. Sailed a.m./28 to arrive Charleston S.C. 2000 zone 5 31/12.
(C.O.A.C., 1347Z/28 to B.A.R.M.)

Oil Ship for Martinique. My 1131R/19. CARTIERDOC, British, reported sighted off Bahram stopped 12 miles eastward of Tobago midnight 23/12. Only masthead light burning but after British Ship(s) passed French Ship(s) lit bow and upper deck light.
(S.O.I. Kingston 1453R/28 to Admty. etc.)

ARCHER. Arrived Philadelphia.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1510Z/28 to Admty.)

QJA, WJA Messages. QJA 55. Ref. QJA 50, these messages will in future be numbered in sequence with QJA and WJA series but with 500 added for easy differentiation. QJA 54 should be numbered 554 and WJA 59 becomes 559.
(C.N.S. Canada 1801Z/28 to all concerned.)

A/S Protection Trinidad. Following for First Sea Lord. We are concerned about the safety from S/M attack of M/Vs at anchor off Port Spain, the number of which has considerably increased since ships returning to U.K. from the Cape were routed via Trinidad.
2. One flotilla of 110 feet M.Ls and flotilla of 72 ft. H.D.L's are allocated and should commence to arrive about April 1942 and June 1942 respectively. Both these flotillas will be fitted with asdics.

/3 ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

A/S Protection, Trinidad. contd.

3. Additional corvettes are desirable, but present commitments elsewhere are more pressing. It would be appreciated if reliance could be placed on assistance being forthcoming from U.S. forces at Trinidad in the event of a sudden necessity arising. 4. Request you will approach U.S. authorities accordingly when you consider circumstances are propitious.
(V.C.N.S. 1810A/28 to B.A.D.)

Aircraft for Convoys.

Re use of auxiliary carriers snd C.A.M. ships, and suggesting development of Autogyro aircraft.
(M. of A.P., 1835/28 to B.A.C., Washington.)
See Lion Copy.

Operations "Archery" "Anklet".

Personal for C.N.S. Reporting Operation "Archery" successfully completed, etc., and Operation "Anklet" withdrawing tonight 28/29.
(V.C.N.S. 1900A/28 to B.A.D.)

Miquelon Lights.

Light (?on) Cape Galantry will be extinguished for tonight and (?other) lights in Miquelon group may be extinguished also. This information is strictly for British Canadian and U.S. Commands only.
(Adm. Muselier, 2115Z/28 to C.C.N.F.(R) U.S.C.N.O. Admty. etc.)

TURECAMO BOYS.

Following from Admty: Have you any further news of American Tug TURECAMO BOYS? 1704A/27 (Ends) No further news at N.S.H.Q. If you have any information request you will pass it to Admty. repeated to other addressees for information.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2115Z/28 to Opnav, C.O.A.C., F.O.N.F.(R) Admty.)

St. Pierre.

Following from Adm. Muselier. I wish to emphasize that I will always be very willing for ships of R.C.N. to call at Saint Pierre but political situation at present demands that I be informed of their E.T.A.
2. I am prepared to provide meteorological information from this station. Do you wish me to organize regular service?
3. Radio Station has resumed service and I am prepared for it to work in conjunction with your W/T organization in common war effort. Request your requirements.
4. Request F.O.N.F. inform me of safe arrival of ACONITE at St. John's N.F.
(MIMOSA, 2120Z/28 to C.N.S. Canada.)

/CORNEVILLE ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - contd.

CORNEVILLE. Norwegian ship CORNEVILLE sailed Hong Kong 29/11 due San Pedro 21/12 has not yet arrived.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2221Z/28 to Admty.)

Australia and New Zealand.

LE TRIOMPHANT. Arrival Brisbane 0740Z/27 LE TRIOMPHANT.
(A.C.N.B. 0037Z/28)
Departure LE TRIOMPHANT, E.T.A. Darwin 0100Z/3/1.
(D.N.O. Queensland, Brisbane 0946Z/28 to A.C.N.B.)
See also China 1028/28.

HOBART. Your 0433Z/27 concur in the retention of HOBART for escort of D.M.1. Convoy M.S.1 will be delayed to allow HOBART to join convoy in Leeuwin area.
(A.C.N.B. 0539Z/28 to C. in C. E.F.)

AQUITANIA. Your 0411Z/27 (N.T.in W.D.) No suitable ships in Australia for use instead of AQUITANIA. An alternative method is being investigated of transfer of troops from AQUITANIA to Dutch or British ships (ex Malaya) at Oosthaven about 16/12. Troops thus transferred would proceed Singapore via Sunda Strait or to Padang whence troops would be taken by road to Djambi and ferried to Singapore. Noted that AQUITANIA cannot use Padang. Request your views include availability of shipping. C.Z.M. has been consulted.
(A.C.N.B. 0725Z/28 to C. in C. E.F.)

Movements. U.S. Cruiser HOUSTON, U.S. Destroyers WHIPPLE, ALDEN and EDSALL escorting GOLD STAR, OTUS and PECOS arrived Darwin 0250Z/28. AUSTRALIA (FLAG) (Corrupt Group) CANBERRA, PERTH and ? ACHILLES escorting AQUITANIA, SARPEDON, HERSTEIN, left Sydney 2350Z/27 for (?Eastern Theatre.)
(A.C.N.B.1134Z/28 to Admty. etc.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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U/BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

VOLO — British, 1587 tons, on Government service, sunk about 45 miles N.W. of Mersa Matruh a.m./28. (See Mediterranean) (D.S. 846).

HYDRA II (torpedoed ?13/12). — Norwegian, 1375 tons. from Bangkok to Hong Kong, torpedoed off Mindoro Island, Philippines, on about 13/12. 9 survivors rescued by Swedish COLOMBIA, 5297 tons, and landed at Fremantle. (D.S. 846).

ABSAROKA (torpedoed 24/12). — U.S. 5695 tons, torpedoed and damaged on 24/12, has arrived at San Pedro, California in tow. (D.S. 846).

ANNAVORE (torpedoed 22/12). — Norwegian 3324 tons. torpedoed during night of 21-22/12, is now presumed to have sunk. 13 survivors picked up by a British ship. (D.S. 846).

Submarines Reported.

Estimated approx. positions of U/B's. (D.D.I.C. 1306A/28).

1900A — U/B signal not first sighting report, medium strength bearing 215° at 1900A. My position 060° 30' N. 022° 35' W. May be in vicinity of O.M.50. (BROKE 2030A/28 to A.C.I.C. Rep. BURNHAM).

Submarines Attacked.

U.75 — Sunk by KIPLING. See Mediterranean.

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

To intercept enemy shipping which may now be proceeding to the westward of the Lofoten Islands, TIGRIS and SEALION have been ordered to remain on patrol off the Norwegian coast until the situation clears.

KENT, with Mr. Eden and Mr. Maisky on board, arrived in the Clyde at 1334A today.

At 1215A S.O. Force J engaged upon Operation "Anklet" reported that the Force has been sighted in 66° 31' N. 5° 38' E. by reconnaissance A/C, and escorts of 3 Blenheim Fighters are to meet the Force during daylight tomorrow and the next day.

It has been decided that FORMIDABLE and ILLUSTRIOUS are to proceed to the Far East as soon as possible after completion of refit.

British Air Activity.

During last night 74 A/C attacked Wilhelmshaven, 36 A/C bombed Emden, and 4 A/C attacked the docks at Dunkirk. The operations were helped by perfect visibility and large fires were started at all three places.

Enemy Air Activity.

At 1800A yesterday the Dutch Coaster DE RUYTER was attacked 23 miles N.N.E. of the South Bishops by 3 A/C which fired 2 torpedoes under the ship and dropped 4 bombs astern of her. The ship was damaged and is now beached at Fishguard.

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining.

A.C.I.C. reports today that 124 mines were sunk and 41 more rendered safe off the East Coast of Iceland from the 16th November to the 22nd December.

Owing to fog the approach channels in the Thames Estuary were not swept last night, and one magnetic mine was detonated there by Sweepers at 0715 this morning.

5 magnetic mines were exploded by Sweepers today in the Yarmouth area, and one off the Humber.

The Tyne was closed at 2230 tonight owing to suspected minelaying.

South Atlantic.

Possible Raider. At 0747, DEVONSHIRE intercepted a "Q" report from S.S. CITY OF LISLE in 04° 12' S., 35° 58' W. P/L cancellation has been received, but at 1215 DEVONSHIRE intercepted a message in M.N. code with corrupt indicators, and the probability of it being an attempt by a Raider to simulate a cancellation could not be ignored. However, at 2122Z C. in C. S.A. reported that the message had been decoded and appeared to be a genuine cancellation.

Suspicious Ship. Master of U.S. COLLAMER reports sighting a suspicious tanker on 19/12 in 8° 25' S., 34° 21' W.

D/F Stations. C. in C. S.A. considers that the decision to put an H/F D/F station at Tristan da Cunha needs reconsideration, and prefers St. Helena, where there is already both cable and W/T communication.

/Lourenco ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic - Contd.

Lourenco Marques. — With regard to the proposed use of Lourenco Marques, F.O.I.C. Simonstown reports that while the proposal is desirable to relieve conjestion, the U.S. Naval Attaché, Capetown, is not in favour of ships carrying Lease Lend cargoes calling there for security reasons.

Enemy M/V. — D/F bearings at 2036 and 2219 suggest a German M/V within 150 miles of 29° S., 22° W., probably northbound.

INDOMITABLE. — INDOMITABLE which is due at Capetown on 1/1 is to proceed to Port Sudan to load aircraft for a ferrying trip to the Far East. C. in C. Med. is to provide A/S escort of 3 destroyers, preferably the 3 Australian N's, NAPIER, NIZAM and NESTOR, who will form part of the Eastern Fleet as long as INDOMITABLE remains with that Fleet.

Mediterranean.

As there is urgent need to increase offensive mining in the Far East, C. in C. Med. was asked if he could spare PORPOISE (S/M) or ABDIEL (minelayer) for this duty. He agrees to ABDIEL, and will sail her for Port Said at once.

The title 5th Flotilla has been allocated for the escort flotilla of "Hunts" which C. in C. Med. now desires to form under the direct administration of R.A.(D).

4 alerts were sounded during last night, and bombs were dropped on land and sea. 1 JU.88 was destroyed. Today Malta had 9 alerts. In one at 0747, 36 raiders attacked destroyers off the island and Luqa aerodrome, damaging 2 Blenheims. Another raid at 1243 was made by 24 raiders.

/A force ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean - Contd.

A force of Wellingtons was despatched last night to attack the Naval Base at Salamis and oil installations at the Piraeus. The operations were adversely affected by bad weather. The aerodrome at Heraklion and Suda Bay were also bombed.

Libya and W.D.

3 Sqdns. of Blenheims, including Free French, bombed enemy positions at Bardia. No activity was seen there.
A mine-sweeping flotilla is on passage from Tobruk to Benghazi. S.O. Force I left Tobruk at 0430 in BAGSHOT to direct minesweeping operations in the northern channel into Benghazi which are due to begin at dawn tomorrow.
The port of Derna is now open.

Convoy M.E. 8.

A convoy of 4 M.T. ships from Malta arrived at Alexandria this morning escorted by AJAX, DIDO and 6 destroyers from Malta, 2 of which switched p.m./27 for Malta. CARLISLE and 3 destroyers from Alexandria joined the convoy yesterday morning. The force was attacked several times by JU.88 and once yesterday by T.B. aircraft but the only damage caused to our ships was minor damage to MAORI from near miss.

Piraeus.

Ships in Piraeus have been observed to be embarking German troops and M.T., and their departure is probably imminent, but there is no indication of destination.

Salamis, Crete.

R.A.F. objectives in Greece last night were the naval base at Salamis and oil installations at the Piraeus. Owing to bad weather, only 3 Wellingtons reached Greece.
8 other Wellingtons bombed Heraklion and Suda Bay, Crete.
TORBAY has returned from patrol and reports having sunk several ammunition schooners off Crete and secured one torpedo hit on an Italian destroyer of the PARTHENOPE or CLIO Class inside Navarin harbour on 23/12.

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Far East.

The original plans for allied co-operation in the Far East dealt mainly with the situation on the outbreak of war. C. in C. Far East points out that some machinery for quick executive action is needed, particularly in connection with our vitally important convoys, and he asks whether anything was settled at Washington which bears on the question.
C. in C. Far East 1735/29 contains his appreciation of the situation in the Pacific.

China.

Air raids on Singapore this evening caused only slight damage.

ABDIEL is to sail from Mediterranean, after embarking an outfit of Mark XVII mines with flooders, to join Eastern Fleet.

Shortly after a heavy air raid on Fort Mills (Philippine Is.) today a S/M contact was made in the controlled minefield; 2 mines were fired and a large oil slick was seen,

Slight damage was caused at Medan by air attack today. The reports of parachute landings are without foundation.

America and West Indies.

Oilers. In view of the new conditions re operational responsibility on A.W.I. Station, C. in C. considers he can surrender one of the station oilers when repairs to ORANGELEAF are complete.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 29.12.1941. Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

FORMIDABLE, ILLUSTRIOUS. FORMIDABLE and ILLUSTRIOUS will be required to proceed to Far East as soon as practicable after completion of refit.
Request you will direct ships to forward programmes to include minimum essential working up.
It is important that C.A.F.O. 2380/41 should be fully observed. (A.C.N.S. F., 1653A/29).

CONQUEROR. Your 2120A/14 and N.O.I.C. Faeroes 1629A/12. Consider it more desirable oil fuel barge should be allocated. In absence of increased storage facilities operational value of CONQUEROR will be much restricted and ship will have to return to Scapa to refuel. Barge could be moored in near oiler berth at Skaale Fiord where protection could be afforded both to it and to CONQUEROR the latter is fuelling.
(A.C.O.S., 1704/29 to Admty)

Co-operation with Russia.

Movements of Russian Ships. Serial No. 8. Six M/Vs. Details.
(D.T.D., 1800/29 to Adm. Miles).

Movements.

ILLUSTRIOUS, ST. ALBANS, BURZA. C. in C. W.A. 1059A/25. Sailed ST. ALBANS.
(N.O.I.C. Londonderry, 0402A/29).
My 0944A/28. Sailed. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0644A/29
Arrived ST. ALBANS at 1720A.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1747A/29)
1700A/29 arrived at Bar Light Vessel ILLUSTRIOUS, ST. ALBANS. BURZA detached to base from I one buoy. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 2255A/29).

ASCANIA. A.M. 1232/30/10. ASCANIA will be ready to sail a.m.6/1. Request destination.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 0907A/29 to Admty).
Your 0907/29. Destination of ASCANIA on leaving Southampton is Clyde. (D.O.D. (H), 1658A/28 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

ADVENTURE. My 1059A/27 and 1116A/27. ADVENTURE delayed 24 hours due to fog. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 0927A/29).

STURGEON. Request you will hold STURGEON at Scapa for the time being. (F.O.S., 1003A/29 to A.C.O.S.)

/CHESHIRE...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 29.12.1941. Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. - Contd.

CHESHIRE.	CHESHIRE leaves Clyde for Freetown 10/1. (S.O.W.P., 1020A/29)
BARCLOSE, BARFOAM, BARFORD, CARDAK, SILIVRI.	C. in C. W.A. 2354A/10 and 1605A/11. Sailed B.D.Vs. BARCLOSE, BARFOAM, and BARFORD with Ferry Steamers CARDAK and SILIVRI in company speed 7 knots. E.T.A. Horta, Fayal A.M.7/1. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 1125A/29)
KENT.	Request you will sail KENT for Scapa a.m./31. (C. in C. H.F., 1232A/29 to N.O.I.C. Greenock). KENT arrived Clyde. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 1334A/29)
0.14.	Scapa arrival 0.14 with LOCH MONTEITH. (A.C.O.S., 1233A/29).
0.21.	Dundee arrival. 0.21. (Capt. S.9., 1315A/29). (1) Intend to sail 0.21 from Dundee 0900A/30 for Rosyth. E.T.A. May Island 1300A/30. (2) 0.21 will be escorted from Buddon to No.22 buoy by Trawler RIVER LOSSIE request onward escort may be arranged from thence to Rosyth. (3) Request fighter protection may be arranged. (Capt. S.9., 1455A/29 to C. in C. Rosyth)
REGENT.	Subject to defects and change of batteries being completed by 10/1 it is intended to sail REGENT for Portsmouth p.m.16/1. (Capt. S.5., 1416A/29)
PRINCE CHARLES PRINCE LEOPOLD, PRINCESS J, CHARLOTTE.	C.S.10 is requested to sail PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE LEOPOLD, and PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE to arrive Invergordon at 0900A/30. (ii) R.A. (D) is requested to detail escort of one Destroyer. (C. in C. H.F., 1616A/29) Proceed by searched channels so as to arrive Invergordon at 0900A/30. (C.S., 10 1929A/29 to PRINCE LEOPOLD, PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE). My 1616A/29. After exchange of troops has taken place request you will sail PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE LEOPOLD, and PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE, escorted by FORESIGHT, for Scapa. (C. in C. H.F., 2215A/29 to N.O.I.C. Invergordon). Add to my 1535/29. PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE LEOPOLD, PRINCESS J CHARLOTTE escorted by FORESIGHT leaving Scapa 0230/30 to Invergordon. (A.C.O.S., 2306A/29)
SAN ZOTICO.	When convenient detach one ship to Sullom Voe to escort oiler SAN ZOTICO to Scapa. (C. in C. H.F., 1629A/29 to S.O. Force J).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation "Archery".

Have received the undermentioned thirteen German wounded prisoners on 28/12. Names. (V.A.S.N.A., 0131/29).

Denmark Strait Patrol.

My 1000/28. Leaving Hvalfjord with ABELIA 0900/29. E.T.A. 066° 26' N., 023° 11' W. 0100/30. BELLWORT did not bring correct R.D.F. replacement for ABELIA but has transferred part of her own set so that ABELIA is now in full operation and BELLWORT is not. Suggest VERONICA be instructed to do likewise to BELLWORT on return to Hvalfjord. Unless otherwise ordered intend to take up patrol in accordance with F.V.C., One para. 18 and 19 without attempting contact VERONICA.
(ANEMONE, 0800/29 to C.S.1)
(1) Corvette patrols against (corrupt group) enemy. (a) ANEMONE 066° 25' N., 026° W. (b) Not applicable. (c) ABELIA 180° Patrolling on course 270°. (2) On 28/12 very irregular ice edge running 045° and 270° from position 066° 29' N., 026° 11' W. (3) NORFOLK will patrol area between Straumnes and ANEMONE (4) VERONICA and SWEETBRIAR leave patrol for Hvalfjord 18 hours after ANEMONE and ABELIA sail. (5) RENOWN inform S.O. P.A. (C.S.1., 0930N/29 to ANEMONE, VERONICA, A.C.I.C. ABELIA, SWEETBRIAR).
At 1959/29. Estimated situation. NORFOLK and two corvettes on patrol "White". Two corvettes en route for patrol "White".
(A.C.I.C., 1610N/29)

TIGRIS, SEALION.

Unless F.O. Force J orders otherwise I intend you to remain in present patrol areas until situation clarifies. (F.O.S., 1004A/29 to TIGRIS, SEALION).
A. TIGRIS leaves patrol after dark 29th and proceed dived by day as follows:- Through 66° 20' N., 09° E., 63° N., 03° E., 62° N., 03° E., to patrol in vicinity of 270° Utvaer 10 miles. Object to attack cruisers and larger warships. (F.O.S., 1639A/29 to TIGRIS, SEALION).
Enemy shipping may now be proceeding to Westward of Lofoten Islands. SEALION remain on patrol until after dark 30th., then proceed through 67° N., 08° E., and 62° N., 00° 00', to R/V as ordered by S.3. on 2/1 for escort to Holy Loch (F.O.S., 1721A/29 to TIGRIS, SEALION).

/East...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 29.12.1941. Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations. - Contd.

East Coast Patrols. Patrol tonight 2 M.G.Bs. Q.E.3. 3 M.L's Q.E.6. (C. in C. Nore, 1051A/29).
My 1230A/29. One destroyer only is to be sailed to take up patrol C.
(C. in C. Nore, 1516A/29 to Capt. D.16)
My 1045A/29. M.G.Bs. are to carry out patrol Q.E.4.A tonight.
(C. in C. Nore, 1551A/29).

Operation "Anklet". Following has been received begins: C. in C. H.F. from S.O. Force J. My P.C.S. 066° 31' N., 5° 38' E., 245° 11 knots. Sighted by R/C aircraft. Proceeding by reverse of outward route. T.O.O. 1215A. Ends.
(C. in C. H.F., 1522A/29 to F.O.S., C. in C. Rosyth, A.C.O.S.)

SEAWOLF. Request you will sail SEAWOLF so as to arrive Holy Loch about 23/1 carrying out a patrol in Northern Waters on the way if desired.
(F.O.S. 1719A/29 to S.B.N.O. North Russia)

STURGEON. Cancel my 1238A/27. When fuelled, A.C.O.S. is requested to sail STURGEON for Polyarno escorted to position:-
(a) 61° N., 03° 30' W., thence proceeding submerged by day through positions
(b) 66°30' N., 03° 30' W., (c) 71° 50' N., 11° 30' E., to waiting position
(d) 73° 30' N., 24° E. Thence as ordered by S.B.N.O. North Russia. Request A.C.O.S. will indicate E.T.A. at position (d). Object on passage to attack and then report enemy vessels. Torpedoes should not however be expended on unimportant targets. (F.O.S., 1723A/29 to S.B.N.O. North Russia).

British Air Activity.

S.B.R. My 1632A/25. Amend paras. A and B to read A. Area 73, East of 009 W., and South of 049° 30' N. B. Area 76, East of 009° W., and North of 045° 30' N., (F.O.S., 1024A/29 to H.Q.C.C. Rpt. C. in C. Plymouth) (F.O.S. 1756A/29)

Bombing Operations. On day 28/12 no operations. On night 28/29, 73 A/C attacked Wilhelmshaven, 31 A/C bombed Emden and 4 A/C bombed the Docks at Dunkirk.
(H.Q.B.C., 1200/29).

/Escort...

MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity. - Contd.

Escort for Force J.

Expect escort Sorties of 3 Blenheim fighter aircraft from 1st to last light tomorrow. Your estimated position at 0945/30 being 064° 35' N., 001° 30' W., course 180°, speed 11 knots. Escort will be repeated the following day. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1737/29 to S.O. Force J).

Use of Flares by A/C near Convoys.

When in the vicinity of a convoy (minimum limit 15 miles) A/C will not repeat not drop flares to illuminate suspicious A/SV contacts at night unless the escorts have already fired illuminants. In such cases they will inform the S.O. escort of the position of the contact by R/T and suggest the use of flares. When outside this range from a convoy A/C may use flares to illuminate suspicious contacts firing two star recognition cartridges at the same time thereby establishing identity should the contact prove to be friendly. (C. in C. W.A., 1833A/29).

Enemy Air Activity.

"Smilax".

Fighter protection being sent to assist Code Word "Smilax". (Nore W/T, 0751/29).

DE RUYTER attacked on 28/12.

(Dutch Coaster) DE RUYTER when 23 miles N.N.E. of S. Bishops at 1800A/28, was attacked by 2 Heinkels and 1 Junker. 1 Heinkel fired 2 torpedoes from 120 ft. which went under ship, broke surface, and exploded 500 yds. away. 2nd Heinkel dropped 4 bombs astern of ship and machine-gunned ship. Bridge and upper works shot away. 1 casualty badly wounded. Ship now beached at Fishguard. At 1752 CH.L. Strumbles plotted 3 unidentified A/C and 1 surface vessel in close proximity. Western Filter did not identify these plots. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 1339/29).

Unknown Ship.

Intercepted at 1753 G.M.T. D E unknown Station on 1650 kc/s A3. AAAA attacked by aircraft. No position given. (Port Patrick Radio, 1755/29).

Faeroes bombed on 28/12.

Enemy aircraft attacked Skaale Fjord at 1310/28, bombing at random. No casualties or damage. Blenheim patrol in immediate vicinity unable to intercept largely due to lack of communication between ground and aircraft. (O.C. Troops, Faeroes, 1830/29 to War Office).

MOST SECRET.

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Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Thames Estuary.

Owing to fog the approach Channels have not been swept. (X.D.O. Sheerness, 0850/29).
On magnetic mine detonated by Sweepers at 0715/29. Details. (Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1533/29).

Iceland. Mines cleared.

My 1814/9/11. 52 mines sunk between approx. 064° 40' N., 014° 17' W., and 065° 23' N., 013° 39' W. Also 72 mines sunk Reydar Fiord Seidis Fjord (Iceland) area from 17/11 to 22/12. Rendered safe 10 mines mark XX and 31 mines type not yet specified between 064° 15' N., 015° 15' W. and 066° 27' N., 14° 52' W., from 16/11 to 10/12. (A.C.I.C., 1047N/29 to Admty, C. in C. H.F.)

Yarmouth Area.

LL. Sweepers detonated one blue magnetic mine at 1115A/29. (Details) (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1207A/29).
LL sweepers detonated 1 blue magnetic mine at 1250 A, and 1red magnetic mine. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1325A/29).
LL Sweeper detonated one red magnetic mine at 1425A. (details) (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1459A/29)
LL sweeper detonated one red magnetic mine at 1300A and one blue magnetic mine at 1311A. Details (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1607A/29).

Mine off Tjockoe Light.

Following received From Stavanger Radio. Mine warning. A mine sighted at 1515 G.M.T. in bearing 10 degrees from Tjockoe Light distance 0 - 5 min. (Nore W/T, No T.O.O.,T.O.R., 1850/29).

Operation Q.O.

Your 2146A/28. 1. Advantage of permanent minefield is considered to outweigh disadvantage
2. Suggest you consider cutting a channel through 403 Q.Z.X. after operation Q.O. and while sweepers and air co-operation are available.
3. Subsequently Gap E might be mined.
4. Consider PLOVER should carry out Dover operations first.
5. Above scheme was discussed today with V.A. Dover and with an officer on your staff.
(A.C.N.S. H., 1916A/29 to C. in C. Nore).
When B.S.28 has been cleared the final phase of the operation will consist of clearing the overlap of 384 and 403 Q.Z.X. and doing a high percentage sweep 120°, from position A for 10 miles to ascertain possible density of enemy minefield This sweep however should not be undertaken if the force is being shadowed by enemy aircraft.
Request your proposal for final phase. F.O.I.C. Harwich pass P/L version to M/S 9 and M.S.13.
(C. in C. Nore, 2156A/29 to M/S 9).

/Humber...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. - Contd.

Humber. One magnetic mine exploded today at 1107 by Sweeper. Details. (F.O. Humber, 1920A/29).

Tyne. Port of Tyne closed owing to suspected enemy minelaying. Expect to reopen about noon tomorrow. (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 2230/29).

Navigational.

Rosyth. My 2319/28. Port now open. (C. in C. Rosyth, 0757/29).

Tersky Orlov Light. Your 2225C/7 and Admiralty's 620 A.Z. Tersky Orlov light. Authorities here state insulation changed from Green to White. Character as given in Admiralty list Light Co 12, 1941 560. (S.B.N.O. North Russia 1048C/29 to S.B.N.O. Archangel. Reptd. 1st M/S.F., DEDA).

8 B. Buoy. 8 B Buoy reported extinguished. (F.O.I.C. Gt.Yarmouth, 1606A/29).

Casualties & Defects.

QUEBEC CITY. My 0650A and 0854A. QUEBEC CITY now developed further furnace troubles. Have diverted her to Humber. (WINCHESTER, 1200A/29).

MONTENOL. DUCHESS OF MONTROSE. Master R.F.A. MONTENOL reports that ship was involved in collision with S.S. DUCHESS OF MONTROSE p.m. 27th December off Gourock. DUCHESS OF MONTROSE is being repaired on Clyde. (N.S.O., Greenock, 1610/28).

Shipping & Convoys.

C.T.9. C.T. 9 will now comprise VOLENDAM and MONTCALM ex Avonmouth and Clyde respectively. (3) VOLENDAM will embark at Avonmouth on 5/1 and sail 6/1. MONTCALM will embark at Gourock 6/1 and sail 7/1. (D. of S.T., 0348A/29).

P.Q.7. Russians have requested that the two ships of P.Q. 7 be sent to Murmansk to discharge. This will afford them breathing space for ice breakers and increase chances of clearing EMPIRE MEEOR, CHULMLEIGH, and SAINT CLEARS from Bakaritza Request BRITOMART and others concerned may be informed. (S.B.N.O. Archangel, 1135C/29 to Admty).

/P.W.92...

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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys - Contd.

P.W. 92.
ASCANIA.

Your 1000A/28 and my 0907A/29. As no escort is available for independent sailing intend to sail ASCANIA in convoy P.W.92 on 6/1, if a destroyer is available for that convoy, for Milford Haven proceeding thence independently to Clyde. E.T.A. 0900/9.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 1253A/29.)

LOCH GARRY.

N.O.I.C. Oban 1826/28. N.O.I.C. Oban is requested sail LOCH GARRY to R/V with CAPE PORTLAND in position 058° 47' N. 005° 13' W. at 1000/31. S.O.N.T. is requested sail CAPE PORTLAND accordingly to provide escort to Thorshavn. Route as follows from R/V to Thorshavn. Fighter protection requested.
(A.C.O.S., 1538/29 to N.O.I.C. Oban.)

Q.P. 4.

SEAGULL, SPEEDY, STELLA CAPELLA, BUTE with tanker MIRLO sailed Murmansk for Iokank to await Q.P. 4.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 1555C/29.)
My 2309C/28. State of affairs 1200C/29. STALIN bunkered from Trehata. LENIN's portion has been delayed by bad visibility but now proceeding. Position 064° 48' N. 038° 57' E. Speed will be adjusted so that both portions meet at ice. Latest ice R/C shows condition from Puimaup Terski Coast not porous.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 1659C/29 to Admty., EDINBURGH, S.B.N.O. Murmansk.)

Q.P. Convoys.

Signals concerning progress of sailing of Q.P. convoys should be repeated to A.C.I.C.
(D.T.D., 1739/29 to S.B.N.O. Archangel.)

STOKE CITY.

Your 1601A/28. Arrived.
(N.O.I.C. Kirkwall, 1830A/29 to N.O.I.C. Faroes)

P.Q. 7.

My 1834N/28. This should consist of 7 or more ships.
(A.C.I.C., 2245N/29 to C. in C. H.F.)

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

B.D.V's, Horta.

N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada pass to B.C. at Horta, Fayal. B.D.V's BARCLOSE, BARFOAM and BARFORD with ferry steamers CARDAK and SILIVRI in company E.T.A. Horta A.M./7. Coal required on arrival. (N.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 1127A/29 to F.O.C.N.A. etc.)

Naval Vessels and Navicerts.

Your 1830/24. "Naval vessels" are not automatically exempt from complying with Navicert requirements. Exemption is dependent on nature both of cargo and service on which vessel is engaged. (D.E.W.D. 1533A/29 to N.A. Madrid).

Rubber, Casablanca.

C.3. America reports 6 - 20-ton trucks left Casablanca 24/12 for Nemours loaded bales refined rubber, destination Marseilles. (Tangier, 1900/29 to Admty.)

South Atlantic.

INDUSTRIA.

Overdue shipping. Cancel my 1006/27. INDUSTRIA arrived Capetown. (S.O.I. Capetown, 0951B/29, to Admty. etc.)

S.S. QUEEN MARY.

D. of S.T.'s 0301/23. QUEEN MARY sailed from Capetown for Trinidad today 29th requires on arrival 7000 tons fuel 500 tons water. (P.S.T.O. Simonstown 1044Z/29 to N.O.I.C. Trinidad

D/F Stations, Tristan and St. Helena.

My 0953N/30/10. Admty. 1903/12/10 and F.O.I.C. Simonstown's 0959/19/12. Suggest that decision to put an HF/DF Station at Tristan Da Cunha needs reconsideration for the following reasons.
2. Consider there is a definite need for an H/F D/F Station at St. Helena and recommend that equipment allocated to Tristan Da Cunha should be installed there.
3. Next position in order of importance in S. Atlantic, in my opinion, is in Gulf of Guinea, preferably at Pointe Nore or Libreville. If undesirable to put a station in Allied Territory, Lagos is the next choice. Further South at Walvis Bay would be uneconomical as it is on the Great Circle between Ascension and Durban and the climate and conditions are very bad.
(C. in C. S.A., 1241Z/29 to Admty.)

/DAUNTLESS....

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.-Contd.

DAUNTLESS. Your 1023/26. DAUNTLESS from Simonstown after ranging on Capetown degaussing range departs for Table Bay 1420 G.M.T./29 for Pointe Noire, S. of A. 17 knots, E.T.A. 0700 G.M.T./3/1. (N.O.I.C. Simonstown 1503Z/29 to B.L.O. Pointe Noire, Admiralty, etc.)

DAUNTLESS carrying gold. My 1503Z/29. Before leaving Simonstown DAUNTLESS embarked £3,000,000 bullion for U.K. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1505Z/29 to Admty., C. in C. S.A.)

Visit to Rio. Visit approved, 48 hours, dress white. (N.A. Rio de Janeiro 1532Z/29 to S.O.(I) Montevideo, R.A.S.A.D. S.A.S.)

Lourenco Marques. B.A.D. Washington 1615/20 and Admty. 1326/27. Matter is still under discussion with U.S. N.A. Capetown. While proposal is most desirable to relieve congestion U.S. N.A. is not in favour of ships carrying Lease Lend cargoes calling at Lourenco Marques for security reasons. C.S.A. Lourenco Marques is able to route onwards if required. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1545Z/29 to C. in C. S.A., (R) Admty., C. in C. E.I.)

CITY OF LISLE. "Q" Report. DEVONSHIRE intercepted QQQQ from CITY OF LISLE, suspicious vessel in 004° 12' S. 035° 58' W. at 0747. H/F P/L cancellation has been received but at 1215 DEVONSHIRE intercepted 8 groups of M.N. Code with corrupt indicators from CITY OF LISLE. This may have been genuine but probability of it being an attempt by a raider to simulate a cancellation cannot be ignored. (C. in C. S.A. 1550Z/29 to Admty., R.A.S.A.D., (R) DEVONSHIRE CANTON, CILICIA).
My 1550/29. Message from CITY LISLE has now been decoded and appeared to be a genuine cancellation. (C. in C. S.A. 2122Z/29 to Admty. etc.)

DEVONSHIRE. CILICIA. CANTON. Your 2117Z/24. Fuel remaining at 1200Z/29 DEVONSHIRE 76% CILICIA 80% CANTON 56%. R/V for 1100Z/31 007° 30' N. 035° 00' W. A.M.Cs. will pass through 006° 39' N. 040° 00' W. tomorrow Tuesday. (DEVONSHIRE 1732Z/29 to C. in C. S.A.)

/INDOMITABLE.....

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic-Contd.

INDOMITABLE. Amended E.T.A. 1300B/31. Intend to fly 2 Albacores ashore arriving about 0800B/31. Request any local recognition procedure for aircraft may be communicated. (INDOMITABLE, 1837Z/29 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown).

Convoy Conferences Sierra Leone. Your 1835Z/28. Additional seatime entailed in S.O.'s Ship proceeding to Freetown is not acceptable. (C. in C. W.A., 1854A/29 to C. in C. S.A.)

Suspicious Tanker. Master of COLLAMER reports having sighted on 19/12 in 008° 25' S. 034° 21'W. a tanker which he considered acting suspiciously. Description. Ship overhauled COLLAMER until 2 miles abeam then altered course to northward and stopped. Ship made definite smoke signals with stack but at no time made any recognizable signal. Last seen heading west. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 2017Z/29 to R.A.S.A.D.)

Mediterranean.

Piraeus Activity. Several ships in Piraeus observed to be embarking German troops and M.T. Departure probably imminent destination unknown. (Capt. S.1., 0005B/29 to S/M's on Patrol).

PORPOISE. ABDIEL. There is an urgent requirement for increasing our offensive mining effort in Far East. Request your views on whether you can spare either PORPOISE or ABDIEL for this duty. (Hd. of M. 0015A/29 to C. in C. Med.)
Your 0015A/29 ABDIEL can be spared. Intend to sail her for Port Said at once. Should an outfit of mines be embarked for passage Far East? This would entail a visit to Haifa before proceeding. (C. in C. Med., 1131B/29 to Admty.)
Your 1131/29. ABDIEL should embark an outfit of Mark XVII mines with flooders. (D.D.O.D. (M) 1657A/29 to C. in C. Med.)

/Benghazi.....

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean-Contd.

Benghazi Minesweeping.	Comply with C. in C. 1935/27 and S.O. Force I 1731/28. S.O. Force I left in BAGSHOT 0430. (S.O. Force I Tobruk, 0745B/29 to SIKH, ? HOTSPUR (R) BAGSHOT).
KINGSTON.	Return to Alexandria. (C. in C. Med. 0816B/29 to KINGSTON (R) Capt. (D) 14, R.A. (D) Med.)
LIPARI. (German)	Departure about 23 hours 28/12. (Consul, Malaga 1030/29 to Bedrock (R) Admty.)
Enemy Units.	Have gained contact 1 D/R 1 M/V 33.56 N., 11.15 E. C11° 12. (A/C F. 1120/29 to Med. A/C).
UNA. P.35.	Proceed through positions:- A. 038° 05' 010° 50' B. 037° 54' 011° 53' C. 037° 20' 012° 50' D. 037° 10' 013° 12' E. 036° 10' 014° 00' (Corrupt group). Adjust speed to proceed submerged between positions B and C during daylight 2/1 and thence by S.E. searched channels to arrive Marsamsett before 1800B /3rd making E.T.A. when east of 14°. Ref. QBB 198 southern sector Gozo light will be exhibited for 10 minutes every hour from 0500 to 0710/B on 3rd and 4/1. P.35. to follow same route 24 hours after UNA. (V.A. Malta 1131B/29 amended 2045B/29 to UNA (R) F.O.C.N.A. Capt. S.8, P.35, P.39, O.24, C. in C. Med., Capt. S.1.)
Carrier Position	Ref. Prime Minister's Susan No. 151 of 27/12 para. 2b. Place name to which carrier is to be sent to put up Hurricanes was received corrupt and doubt arises as to whether port intended is Massawa or Kilindini. Your 220 of 27/12 mentions Massawa. Please confirm. (C. in C. M.E., 1132/29 to W.O.)
U-boat sinkings.	Consider it very desirable to publish sinking of enemy submarines in this area in order to encourage crews of ships on Western desert run who have suffered many losses and show some reluctance to sail. Intend making statement to press on 2/1. (C. in C. Med. 1145B/29 to Admty.) Reply: Admty. 1742A/1/1/42).

/Alexandria....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean-Contd.

Alexandria, boom gate.

State of Boom gate at Alexandria considered unsatisfactory for defence against human torpedo. Proposals. Request advice.
(C. in C. Med., 1215B/31 to Admty.).

Benghazi.

Following is my general intention for opening port of Benghazi.
(A) S.O. Force "I" is to report expected date port will be opened. N.O.I.C. Alexandria is to sail ANTWERP escorted by 2 destroyers detailed by R.A. (D) Med. to arrive Benghazi on that day. Naval and army port operating parties and their stores are to be embarked in ANTWERP.
(B) 2 "A" lighters and 4 "D" Lighters are to be sailed to Benghazi by S.O. Force "I" as agreed locally with proposals of 8th Army.
(C) N.O.I.C. Alexandria in conjunction with P. S.T.O. Egypt and S.O. Force "I" is to arrange tonnage or shipment to Cyrenaican port of tugs and lighters (corrupt group) "Agression" para. 44. Naval crews will be provided for the 2 seagoing tugs at Benghazi.
(D) First convoy for Benghazi consisting of HARBOE and JENSEN and CHRISTA is to be sailed when ordered by C. in C. Med. N.O.I.C. Benghazi to report time it can be received.
(E) 2 motor launches will be sailed to join Force "I" on completion of refit.
(C. in C. Med. 1227B/29 to all concerned in "Aggression").

Libya.

Cositrep No. 80. 4 Ind. div. states reliably reported Benghazi that about 5,000 own prisoners have been evacuated by sea to Greece.
Summary. Continued pressure has not yet succeeded in dislodging the enemy from his strong position at Agedabia, the right flank of which is protected by his armour.
(C. in C. M.E. 1525/29 to W.O.)
Situation and Appreciation, for C.I.G.S. from Gen. Auchinleck.
(C. in C. M.E., 1636/29 to W.O.)
See Lion Copy.

/INDOMITABLE.....

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean-Contd.

INDOMITABLE. A.M. 2125/10.
Cs. in C. concerned are requested to arrange for INDOMITABLE (due Capetown 1/1) to proceed independently to Port Sudan at best speed to load aircraft for a ferrying trip to Far East, details of which will be signalled later.
2. Ship is to disembark her own outfit of aircraft at Aden on passage North except 12 Albacores and 8 Sea Hurricanes which are to be retained for protection.
3. C. in C. Med. is requested to detail 3 destroyers and arrange for them to meet INDOMITABLE in vicinity of Socotra and act as A/S escort to Port Sudan and throughout ferrying operation. It would be convenient if the 3 Australian N's NAPIER, NIZAM and NESTOR could be detailed for this. They will subsequently be be required to form Eastern Fleet so long as INDOMITABLE remains with that Fleet.
4. Authorities are requested to pass necessary information contained in this and subsequent signals to Air Authorities concerned.
5. F.O.I.C. Simonstown pass to INDOMITABLE on arrival at Capetown. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1639A/29 to C's in C. Med., E.I. S. A.)

German Shipping. Departure 27th ELIZABETH HENDRIK FISSER for Cartagena in ballast. Departure 24th from Burriana SULLBERG for Marseilles. HANS SCHMIDT expected sailing 29/30th for Garrucha to load Iron ore. (Valencia 1712/29).

11th D.F. (HUNT'S) Your 1759B/28. 11th flotilla allocated. (D.O.D. (F) 1810A/29 to C. in C. Med.)
A.M. 1810A/29. For 11th read 5th. (D.O.D. (F) 1259A/1/1/1942).

Air Report. Day 28/12.
Martlets patrolling over convoy en route to Alexandria from Malta engaged 4 enemy torpedo bombers off Cyrenaica coast destroying 1 forcing 2 to jettison. Fourth made a wild shot which ran wide. 1 Martlet down. Fulmars subsequently drove off large formation JU. 88's attempting high level attack forcing them to jettison bombs. Night 28/29. Objectives in Greece were naval base Salamis and oil installations Piraeus. Only 3 Wellingtons reached Greece owing to bad weather. Bombs dropped near munitions factory Salamis, on Piraeus, and jetty port Heracles. Bursts seen but damage not ascertained. 8 Wellingtons bombed Heraklion and Suda Bay Crete. Bombs fell on aerodrome runway Heraklion and started fire near buildings in town. Remaining Wellingtons returned or jettisoned bombs owing to icing and engine trouble. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1819/29).

/THORN.....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean-Contd.

THORN.
PROTEUS.
THUNDERBOLT.

THORN is to leave patrol p.m./31 and return to Alexandria through 037° 46' 019° 30' 035° 44' 021° 10' 032° 35' 028° 26' passing second position about 2200B/1/1 and arriving Alexandria Sactuary 0500B/5.
PROTEUS and THUNDERBOLT are to establish patrols in areas P.1 and P. respectively entering these areas at 0200B/1/1 keeping to N.E. of line 320° / 140° through 037° 54' 019° 54'. (Capt. S.1, 1921B/29 to S/M's named).

Situation Report 179.

Convoy of 4 M.T. ships from Malta arrived Alexandria a.m. /29 one ship continuing to Port Said. Convoy was escorted by AJAX, DIDO and 6 destroyers from Malta, 2 of which switched p.m. 27 for Malta. CARLISLE and 3 destroyers from Alexandria joined convoy a.m./28. Force was attacked several times by JU.88 and once by T.B. aircraft on 28th apparently not having been sighted previously. Attacks successfully broken up on 2 occasions by Fulmar and Martlets, one enemy T.B. being shot down by Martlet, who was afterwards shot down himself.by enemy. One Fulmar forced to land, crew saved. Minor near miss damage to MAORI.
2. Western Desert. Mine-Sweeping Flotilla now on passage Tobruk to Benghazi covered by destroyers Sweeping to commence daylight 30th. Extensive minelaying by aircraft reported off Benghazi and possibly some mines in harbour. Harbour facilities and moles reported damaged and (? one) ship scuttled to block entrance. But anticipate daily rate of 600 tons can be handled after some clearance.
3. Port of Derna now open.
4. Convoys running to and from Tobruk have encountered heavy scale of U-boat attack. WARSZAWA torpedoed by U-boat at 1430/26 in 032° 10' N. 024° 32' E. taken in tow by PEONY to Tobruk but torpedoed again and sunk at 2015/26. Total casualties four crew and 20 South African. B.D.V. BURGONET rescued 309 and PEONY remainder of survivors. My 1202/28, about 14 survivors of VOLO in Lighter A.11 and LEGION. My 1922/26, no survivors rescued from SALVIA but wreckage found in 031° 46' N. 028° E. at 1630/25 indicating SALVIA probably torpedoed and sunk there while returning with SHUNTIEN survivors.
5. In addition to U.75 definitely sunk by KIPLING and LEGION at 0450/28, (? already) attack delivered by KIPLING and LEGION a.m./27 on submerged object 15 miles West of Tobruk.

/6.....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Situation Report 179 - Contd.

6. Haifa. PHENIX now sunk in middle of harbour with stern clear of water. VILJA cargo and hull intact bridge living quarters and engine room burnt out.
7. Submarine. TORBAY returned from (corrupt group) patrol. One ammunition schooner sunk off Suda Bay on 12/12. 3 schooners sunk off Methoni on 15/12 and one 22/12 all sunk by gunfire. Folbot attempt on ship in Navarin night 16th 17th foiled by ship sailing. Several attacks on destroyers unsuccessful but one torpedo hit scored on It. destroyer PARTENOPE or CLIO Class inside Navarin Harbour 1025/23.
Aircraft. See H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1656/27.
(C. in C. Med., 1945B/29 to Admty.)

Malta Air Report.

C.S.R. Malta to 1600 hours 29/12.
28th 1335 hours 12 ME. 109's escorting 1 JU. 88 crossed coast, no bombs, Hurricanes intercepted, 1 missing. Night 28/29, 4 alerts for 10 JU.88's, 1606, 1740, 1947, 2125 hours. Bombs land, sea, damage reports not yet available. A.A. destroyed 1 JU. 88. 4 Wellingtons Mark 2 successful attack main quay Tripoli 2246 - 2333 hours, bombs hitting quay, 1 fire started.
29/12. 9 Alerts. 0608 hours, 1 R/C Aircraft. 0747 hours, 36 Raiders Fighters and Bombers attacked 2 Friendly D/Rs off Malta (Bomb damage not yet reported) and Luqa Aerodrome damaging 2 Blenheims. Hurricanes intercepted 1 ME. 109, probably destroyed. 2 Hurricanes collided crashed Sea 1 Pilot safe. 1 other Hurricane damaged. 1008 and 1121 hours, total 12 R/C aircraft crossed coast great height. 1243 hours, 24 Raiders Fighters and Bombers crossed Coast. Bomb Damage not yet available. 1 ME. 109 and 1 Hurricane destroyed. Pilot of Hurricane missing A.A. in action 3 Alerts.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 2035/29, 2047/29).

APHIS bombardment.

C. in C. 2021/27 and 1135/29. Sailing APHIS escorted by SOUTHERN MAID at 0715/30 through Z at 1020 thence to position 032° 16' N. 025° 05' E. at 1315, arriving Bombardment position 1600/30. On completion returning by reverse route arriving dawn Tobruk. 269 Wing requested to arrange fighter protection from 1300/30. Codeword "Minor".
(S.O. Force I, Tobruk, 2109B/29 to C. in C. Med. etc.)

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Defence of Rangoon.

3. Internal situation Rangoon much brighter.
7. When House re-assembles I trust (? Prime Minister) will give some prominence to battle for Rangoon. Our pilots have done even better than was achieved in battle for Britain.
(Govr. Burma, to S. of S., 0235/29.)

Troops for Malaya.

Your 0959/28. Cannot agree to use of CAPETOWN CASTLE. Propose convoy should comprise DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, EMPRESS OF JAPAN, EMPRESS OF ASIA, KOSCHUISKZO and JOHANN DE WITT.
2. WINDSOR CASTLE and CAPETOWN CASTLE should be used for Bombay to Karachi requirement. My 0418/27 refers.
3. WINDSOR CASTLE should be used for movement referred to in my 0349/19.
4. Agree use of INDRAPOERA in B.P. 31.
(D.S.T., 0346A/29 to P.S.T.O. India.)

B.M. 9A.

R.A. Malaya's 0343/26 asks for disposal instructions for B.M. 9A. Request you will reply.
(D.S.T., 0347A/29 to P.S.T.O. India.)

Diego Garcia.

Para. 1. Please see troopers 604680 (Ops.) T.O.O. 0600/27 addressed O.C. Troops Mauritius.
Para. 2. I am most loth to undertake this commitment which involves not only the provision of power boats (of which my resources are still far short of other and more urgent requirements) but also that of crews, maintenance personnel and stores at an island which has no naval base facilities or accommodation.
Para. 3. I have already given the Indian contingent at Diego Garcia all the assistance in my power (vide my 1356/17) despite A.M. ?330/23rd August, para. (D) which states that this is entirely an Indian commitment and I am at a loss to understand why it should now be suggested that I should also provide the boats crews etc.
(C. in C. E.I., 1316Z/29 to Admty.)

Accommodation for H.Q.

It appears inevitable that my staff will require expansion and very possibly accommodation will be required for C. in C. E.F. with necessary H.Q. Construction of a special H.Q. is impracticable. The only suitable building to which communications can easily and quickly be run is Bauer Block of Flats adjacent to my present Headquarters. Intend therefore to requisition this block of flats in stages as necessary.
(C. in C. E.I., 1758Z/29 to Admty.)

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Japanese Destroyer sunk.

At 1600/24, a Netherlands S/M sank a Japanese destroyer of the AMAGIRI class off Kuching in Sarawak, Borneo.
(D.S., 846, 29/12.)

Japanese Cruiser bombed.

A Japanese cruiser steaming north of the Celebes was set on fire by bombs dropped by an Australian Hudson aircraft stationed at one of the N.E.I. aerodromes.
(N.E.I. Official Report, Batavia, 29/12, in the Times 30/12.)

Malaya.

Sitrep No. 19. 1630 hours G.M.T./28.
Sarawak. Kuching occupied by Japanese.
Air. 28/12, Glenn Martins carried out attack on enemy destroyers or light cruisers and merchantmen off Kuching. No direct hits.
R/C West coast Malaya negative report and R/C N.W. from Palau Timman reported one M/V only. Raid by 3 Japanese Army type 97 on Port Swettenham. Damage to wharf and train and one tug sunk. A.A. shot down one certain and one probable.
(Adv. H.Q. Malaya, 0434/29 to W.O.)

Vesca System.

Your 1710/25. Concur.
(C. in C. E.F., 0541Z/29 to Admty.)

Navigation.

Singapore Strait.
Red conical light buoy group flashing green referred to in C. in C. China's memorandum No.4658, Oct. 1941 para.7 of 094 W.D.B. (original W.D.B. No.125) has been sunk. Further notice will be given when re-established.
(R.A. Malaya, 0751Z/29 to China Station and R.F.A's.)

Shipping Control, Malaya.

Control of shipping in Malay is to be based on following policy.
(1) No ships are to be sailed for Malay Harbour unless (a) loaded with essential war stores or food supplies; (b) suitable for lifting essential cargo which is already available.
(2) Ships leaving Malay are to be loaded with rubber or other priority cargo even in comparative small amounts whenever opportunity occurs.
(3) Coastal shipping is to be maintained at the highest level consistent with the possibilities of trading and the exigencies of existing situation.

(4) The ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Shipping Control, Malaya. (Contd.)

(4) The quick turn round of shipping in Malayan ports, together with the policy of keeping the minimum number of ships of large tonnage in port at any time, is to be considered as being of utmost importance.
(R.A. Malaya, 0947Z/29 to S.O.I. Singapore.)

Allied Co-operation.

For Chiefs of Staff.
Original plans for allied co-operation in the Far East dealt mainly with situation on out-break of war. Now we are past the initial phase not only joint planning butsome machinery for quick executive action is needed. This is not easy as the Americans are remote and deeply committed in the P.I., also they seem strictly controlled from Washington.
2. C. in C. E.F. has drawn attention to urgency of Naval aspect in his personal 0753/28 or 0754/28 to First Sea Lord.
3. Problem concerns all services and we are puzzling over it particularly in connection with our vitally important convoys. If anything was settled at Washington bearing on this question it would be helpful to hear earliest.
(C. in C. F.E., 1130/29 to W.O.)
Reply: 1250/30.

Far East.

Situation and appreciation.
(C. in C. F.E., 1735/29 to W.O.)
See Lion Copy.

Mine Warnings.

The policy with regard to promulgation of mine warnings and searched channels adopted advantageously in Home Waters has been (details).
2. The following methods are available to you - vide C.B. 01618L/40.
3. Present method of promulgating dangerous areas by W Message and searched channels in Cyphered Q.D.B. Messages may be disadvantageous in the long run.
(A.C.N.S.(F), 1905A/29 to C. in C. E.F.
(R) R.A. Malaya, A.C.N.B., N.Z.N.B., C. in C. E.I)

Disposal of American Aircraft.

Following for Chiefs of Staff.
Major Gen. Brett, U.S. Air Corps Chief of Staff passed through Singapore 29/12 remaining only 15 minutes but one of my staff met him. Realised need for fighters superior to Buffaloes here having seen raid on Mingaladon with Wavell 27/12. We represented need here for Tomahawks to assist

/arrival ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary. 29.12.1941. Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Disposal of American Aircraft. (Contd.)

arrival of convoys and use of available heavy bombers to deal with ships and bases. Urge every effort be made to convince Washington that Australia is not at present threatened and immediate use of these aircraft in Malaya and Java might well mean it would not be.
(C. in C. F.E., 2116/29 to W.O.)

Singapore.

Re Commerical Coal Stocks.
(D.T.D., 2116A/29 to C. in C. E.F.)

ABDIEL.

After embarking outfit of Mark XVII mines with flooders, ABDIEL is being sailed from Med. to join Eastern Fleet. 2. C. in C. E.F. is requested to inform necessary authorities of her destination.
(A.C.N.S.(F), 2250A/29 to C. in C. E.F.)

America and West Indies.

U.S. Co-operation, Trinidad.

Admty. 1810A/28. Please inform 1st S.L. that reports from N.O.I.C. Trinidad indicate that U.S. authorities there are giving all assistance possible with such forces as are available. Any additional A/S craft which can be spared will be of greatest assistance until motor launches arrive.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 10010/29 to B.A.D.)

Oilers.

In view of new conditions regarding operational responsibility on A.W.I. Station, consider that one of Station oilers can be surrendered for other service when repairs to ORANGELEAF are complete. Propose BISHOPDALE should be surrendered, the other two being fully employed.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 11410/29 to Admty.)

PANDORA.

My 1410/17. Programme for PANDORA is delayed 3 days. Ship finally sails for Halifax Sunday 11/1.
(B.A.R.M., 1206R/29 to Admty.)

/Sweepers ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

Sweepers and A/S Vessels.

Following for B.A.S.R. Your 1059B/29/10.
1. A.M.C. class of minesweepers unsuitable for meeting requirement included as 6th item in our 1408/13/12 for moored and magnetic minesweepers.
2. P.C. 542-577 class sub-chasers appear suitable for local patrol work, but not for ocean escort. Owing to shortage of local A/S vessels overseas, 50 vessels would be acceptable towards meeting urgent and immediate requirement of A/S Local Craft included as 7th item in our 1408/13.
(Head of N.A.S. Section, 1305A/29 to B.A.D.)

Washington Report.

Washops 19.
(i) Philippine Is. and N.E.I. At Danortis enemy have constructed a pier capable of handling 3 ships simultaneously. Additional sinkings are reported by U.S. S/Ms. as follows: 25/12 one transport, 27/12 one supply ship. The continuance of S/M operations from Manila Bay is now impracticable considered due to Japanese air superiority, increased bombing activity and lack of overhaul and supply facilities. 6 P.B.Ys from Ambon made an unsuccessful attack on a Japanese battleship, cruisers, destroyers and transports lying in Tutu Bay Jolo. U.S. Destroyer PEARY reports being attacked in Celebes Sea by 4 four-engined aircraft and 3 dive-bombers carrying British markings: aircraft presumed to be Japanese. Medan, Sumatra, bombed by 17 Japanese planes during afternoon of 28/12. Small Japanese landing on Tambelan Island (between Singapore and Sarawak).
(ii) Hawaii. A report dated 29/12 states S/M contacts have been more numerous in last 2 days all being outside immediate approach to Pearl Harbour, 1 contact report 180 miles North Palmyro. 3 attacks were carried out by destroyer and 4 by aircraft. 1 attack is considered successful. 13 survivors from S.S. PRUSA landed Honolulu report their ship was torpedoed on 18/12 100 miles south of Hawaii.
(iii) U.S. Pacific Coast. U.S. Naval Commander Hawaii Anamba Is. District considers Japanese submarine organisation operating as follows: 3 in approx. 022° N. 120° W., 1 near San Diego, 1 or more in general vicinity of San Francisco.

(iv) U.S. ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Washington Report. (Contd.)

(iv) U.S. Atlantic Coast. Following received from master of PRESIDENT ADAMS on arrival at Key West: on 25/12 when about 300 miles off Savannah, periscope was sighted off port quarter, range at approx. 2000 yards steering on easterly course at slow speed but speed increased soon after sighting. PRESIDENT ADAMS fired 5 rounds from her 5-inch guns. After fifth shot an unmistakable torpedo track was sighted showing (Corrupt group) on glassy sea. Torpedo track passed astern of S.S. EXETER who reported seeing a line of bubbles. Captain and whole of bridge staff of PRESIDENT ADAMS substantiate this statement.
(J.S.M. Washington, 1331R/29 to Admty., etc.)

Shipping Control Staff.

Your 2129R/27. Capt. Bittleston will be sent but we should prefer to have copy of new proposals mentioned in para. 1A for study before he leaves, so that he may be acquainted with Admiralty views thereon. Request summary may be signalled. 2. Lt. Com. Goldrich who has expert knowledge of Vescas and independent routeing will also be sent.
(A.C.N.S.(T), 1411A/29 to B.A.D.)

Information of Movements.

Your 1752A/21. Para.(a). Opnav is now sending a weekly signal to Admty. giving positions of main U.S. units (not destroyers or submarines). (ii) Para.(b). At present Opnav are not making daily signal but are informing Admty., C. in C. A.W.I., N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, and C.O.A.C. Halifax of all movements affecting them before or when they take place. They are against a daily signal because it might be inaccurate as Task Force Commanders sometimes have to change their plans without breaking W/T silence to tell Opnav. (iii) Para.(b)(ii). This recently has been fully emphasized here, and it is understood it is being done.
(B.A.D., 1421R/29 to Admty.)

U/B Report.

At 1704 G.M.T. in position 30 miles off Savannah Georgia, 25/12, U.S.S. PRESIDENT ADAMS reports having sighted periscope off port quarter, ADAMS firing 5 shots from deck gun at periscope and after 5th shot saw torpedo track pass astern of another ship in company. This report considered reliable.
(U.S.C.N.O., 1511Z/29 to Admty., C. in C. A.W.I., F.O. Jamaica Force.)

/DONERAIL ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

DONERAIL. Have you any news of Panamanian DONERAIL due Vancouver 20/12 from Suva?
(D.T.D., 1536A/29 to D.N.I.(Ottawa).)

BENCLEUCH. My 2209Z/16. Interrogation of Chief Engineer and Second Officer ? seems sabotage suspected at Leith and that crew considered completely reliable. Written report follows.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1546Z/29 to Admty., (R) C.O.A.C., C.C.N.F.)

C.A.M.Ships' Movements. Possibility suggested of raids on vulnerable points in Newfoundland or Eastern Canada by catapulted planes.
2. For information of air patrols it is therefore essential that movements of friendly C.A.M. ships be known.
3. Suggested for consideration that all intended routes of C.A.M. ships after dispersal from O.N. Convoys be communicated in advance direct to F.O.N.F. repeated N.S.H.Q., C.O.A.C.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1631Z/29 to Admty.)

NIDARDAL distress. Master of British SAN GASPAR reports at 1612Z/15/12 intercepting S O S message from Norwegian ship NIDARDAL giving position as 56° 07' N. 21° 00' W, and stating slowly sinking owing to bad leak in engine room.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 1639Q/29 to Admty., etc.)

French Shipping. Casablanca and Marseilles, arrivals and departures.
(B.A.D., 1717R/29, 1719R/29 to Admty.)
See Lion Copy.

Vichy Intelligence. Meter, Dakar 24/12 A.1. MONTESQUIEU, MEDIE II, ARIZONA and C.M. ARMAND BLANC left, Casablanca. Casablanca 26/12 A.1. CHATEAU PAVIE, CAPITAINE LE DIABAT, S. MAXIME, BONIFACIO sailed northwards.
(B.A.D., 1723R/29 to Admty., etc.)

Vichy Shipping. Intercepted letter dated Marseilles 8/12 states "I am still in the SIDI OKBA and we make regular trips Bone-Phillipeville-Marseilles. This is the only oil burning ship the Company has left. Two other ships which are running have been adapted for coal. The rest of the S.G.T.M. Ships are stationed at Bougie."
(C. in C. A.W.I., 2129Q/29 to Admty.)
N.I.D. Comment: Only 4 ships of this company are known to be laid up at Bougie, ALSINA, FLORIDA, SIDI BEL ABBAS, SIDI BRAHMIN. There are 13 ships in all belonging to this company.

/CIRCASSIA ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

CIRCASSIA, refit. — Your 1702/27. Decision must await conclusion of conference now in progress at Washington. D. of P. Approved A.C.N.S.(F), 2146A/29 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Gilbert Is. Ocean I. — Japanese in Gilbert Islands.
Holland in Tarawa has reported that Christmas Day raid was mild, no damage or casualties but that some stores were taken. Betio only visited; Japanese flag ordered to be flown daily and early occupation of Tarawa likely. He enquires as to possibility of approach to the Japanese S.N.O. Jaluit, regarding safe conduct of vessel to evacuate Europeans from the Island.
2. Position with regard to supplies in Ocean Island will become extremely serious when the present stocks are enhausted, as the population will then face starvation. Indigenous population could no doubt subsist if Europeans and Cingalese labourers, Chinese and Gilbertese (numbering approx. 228 and 701 respectively exclusive of Gilbertese wives and children) were removed and conditions are presumably (same ? omitted) in Nauru.
3. In view of the gravity of the position, I earnestly renew the suggestion in my telegram of 10th December that some plan of action should be considered with a view to evacuating Ocean Island.
(High Commr. W. Pacific, 1635/29 to S. of S. for Colonies.)

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated approximate positions of U/Bs.
(D.D.I.C., 1409A/29, 1412A/29.)

1704
G.M.T./25.

U.S.C.N.O., 1511Z/29.
See America and West Indies.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

A photographic R/C of Brest at 1430 today shows GNEISENAU alongside the T/B Station, and SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN in their usual docks.

S.O. Force "J", now returning from Operation "Anklet", has detached LAMERTON for Scapa with 27 German prisoners and reports that 266 Norwegian refugees, of whom 133 are men, are embarked in others of his ships.

In view of the difficulties experienced in sailing P.Q. Convoys punctually from Hvalfiord, it is suggested today that they might preferably be sailed direct from Loch Ewe exchanging escorts when off Seidisfiord. It is also suggested that the Q.P. Convoys on reaching Seidisfiord might be escorted to Loch Ewe instead of to Kirkwall.

British Air Activity.

2 sorties of Fighter A/C were made this morning to Force "J", but no more will be possible today owing to the weather. Bomber Command aircraft attacked the battlecruisers at Brest today.

Mining.

Minelaying by enemy aircraft last night is reported from the Tyne to the Wash.

The Tyne was re-opened at 1034 this morning.

At 0014 the ports of Tees and Hartlepool were closed owing to suspected minelaying, and they will be closed daily for the next 12 days from 1800 till about noon on the following day.

Eight Magnetic Mines were exploded by Sweepers today off Spurn Point.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

Freetown. C. in C. S.A. reports that the water situation at Freetown is serious. M/V's are to take in as much as possible at other ports and distil on passage.

Falkland Is. C. in C. S.A. asks whether the Admiralty can rush out one or more long range 6 inch guns to strengthen the coast defence of the Falkland Islands (see 27/12). BIRMINGHAM, wearing flag of R.A.S.A.D., arrived Rio de Janeiro today and will leave on 1/1 for the Falklands where she is due on 7/1.

Co-ordination of effort. C. in C. S.A. requires earlier information of intended movements of U.S. Task forces in the South Atlantic, so that the movements of his Patrol Force may be co-ordinated to the best advantage. In his opinion too, forces whose object is the interception of southbound raiders and northbound Axis shipping are more economically employed in working an area than on taking a cast into mid-Atlantic. The question is under discussion in Washington.

Mediterranean.

Malta. 3 soldiers were killed and 4 injured in an air raid last night. There were several raids today, in one of which at 0942, 40 fighters and 6 JU. 88's attacked Takali, Luqa and the dockyard. The dockyard was again bombed at 1440, but no damage is reported.

S/M. Operations. S/M TRIUMPH reports part 1 of her special operation completed. She has brought back certain information re German forces in Crete, which, however, N.I.D. state is quite untrue.
At 1641B today THORN secured 3 hits with torpedoes on a laden 6,000 ton tanker in 38° 35' N. 20° 27' E., course 290° and sank her.
PROTEUS at 0900 today hit and probably sank a 4000 ton transport with destroyer escort steering west in 38° 7' N. 20° 25' E.

/Convoy.....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean-Contd.

Convoy A.T.9.

HEYTHROP, escorting Convoy A.T.9 to Tobruk was attacked without success at 1448B by 2 torpedo bombers which were driven off by gunfire in 32.10 N., 25.18 E.

Libya and Western Desert.

3 Albacores laid mines outside Zuara Harbour last night while 1 Albacore as a diversion bombed Zuara town. A 2000-ton M/V was seen 2 miles north of the port steering west.

Albacores last night bombed small ships and M.T. at Ras El Aali (26 miles W. of Ageila) scoring near misses on the ships and probably damaging M.T. and jetty.
3 small ships and 3 lighters had been reported close inshore there, lightering supplies ashore to a temporary jetty.

APHIS left Tobruk at 0715 today for a bombarding position at 1600/30. She was unable to bombard as 2 guns south of Bardia straddled her at 1800 yards, but she fired 10 rounds per gun.

C. in C. Middle East emphasises that success in Libya will only reduce our defensive commitments temporarily and we must be prepared to meet a similar scale of attack at some future date. Moreover we shall be faced with the protection of a vulnerable line of sea communications to North African ports.

Black Sea.

Russian landing operations on the Kerch Peninsula started on 26/12 and are continuing. Theodosia has been occupied.

China.

From a report of C. in C. E.F. it appears that it was the Dutch S/M K.14, operating in British sphere but under C.Z.M's operational control, which shadowed an enemy force approaching Kuching p.m./23, and in the evening entered very shallow water and sank 3 troopships and a tanker in spite of escort by a cruiser and 2 destroyers. K.14. was heavily depth charged but was unhurt.

Malaya.

4 bombing attacks by 30 enemy aircraft on Singapore Island last night caused very slight damage. There were several air raids on Port Swettenham today and H.M.S. KUDAT was sunk in the approaches to the port.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Conference of Umpires. — Admiralty 1233A/23. A Conference of Senior Umpires from each Command will be held in the near future in London. It is requested Officers for this duty may be nominated and their names signalled to the Admiralty. The Officers nominated should be of approporiate seniority to express the views of their Commander-in-Chief.
(A.C.N.S.H. 1720A/30 to C's in C Home).

P.511. — On completion of defects to wiring about 7/1 intend that P.511 should be transferred to the 7th Flotilla for A/S training duties. She will not be considered fit for operational patrols, other then in the event of invasion.
(F.O.S. 1834A/30).

Co-operation with Russia.

Technical information — Your 2046A/2. Written replies now received from Russians covering the following points of your signal. Details of Russian mines, sweeps, and Depth-Charges. (Ad. Miles 1230D/30 to Admty.).

Russian S/M's for U.K. — Your 1859D/18. This is a very welcome reinforcement. Request you will obtain confirmation that the Russian authorities have no objection to these submarines being based on U.K. for operations in Biscay and N. Sea areas.
(1st Lord 1244A/30 to Ad. Miles).

Movements.

ADVENTURE — My 0927A/29. ADVENTURE delayed further 24 hours by fog.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 0928/30).

O.21. — My 1455A/29. O.21 sailed E.T.A. 1300A/30.
(Capt. S.9. 0955A/30 to C.in C. Rosyth).
My 1427A/30. Expect to arrive Rosyth 1900A
(O.21 1730A/30).

SEALION. — F.O.(S) 1721A/29. Proceed direct on surface at C.O's discretion from 062° N. 000° E. to R/V with WHITE BEAR in 060° 50' N. 000° 40' W. at 1000A/2.
(Capt. S.3. 1029A/30 to SEALION).
(1) Intend to sail WHITE BEAR at 1200A/31 via Pentland Firth to R/V with SEALION in 060° 50' N. 000° 40' W. at 1000A/2 and escort her to Holy Loch.
(2) N.O.I.C. Greenock is requested to arrange following fighter co-operation.
(Capt. S.3. 1059A/30).

KENT.....

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HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.-Contd.

KENT.	Intend sailing KENT for Scapa passing Clyde Boom 1430A/31 S.of A. 19 knots. E.T.A. 1100A/1. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 1616A/30).
STURGEON	My 1723A/29. Defer sailing of STURGEON until weights and ballast on board have been adjusted for which instructions follow. (F.O.S. 1712A/30 to A.C.O.S. F.O. Force "J" etc.).
BOREAS	Intend to sail BOREAS at 1015/2 for Clyde, carrying out full power trials in War Channel, North of 20 R buoy. E.T.A. Boom noon/3. Request fighter protection. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1750/30).
O.10. OTWAY. JUNON. H.34. H.33. H.43. H.28. H.32.	(A) At 2130A/30 submarines proceed submerged by day as follows:- (B) O.10 through 47° 18' N. 08° 12' W. thence by route C. OTWAY by route D. Both to R/V in vicinity Wolf Rock on 1/1 as ordered by S.7 for onward passage to Clyde. (C) Following submarines to R/V off Lizard Head on 1/1 as ordered by F.O.I.C. Falmouth for passage to Falmouth. JUNON by route E. H.34 by route F. H.32 by route J. H.33 through 47° 30' N. 07° 16' W. thence by route G. H.43 through 47° 16' N. 07° 10' W. thence by route H. After crossing latitude 49° N. Submarines proceed direct to R/V ordered. H.28 through 46° 48' N. 06° 20' W. 47° 44' N. 06° 46' W. thence direct to R/V ordered. (F.O.S. 1859A/30). F.O.S. 1859A/30 para (B). F.O.I.C. Falmouth is requested (1) To sail Z5 to R/V with O10 and OTWAY in position 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles at 0900/1 and escort them to Rothesay. (2) To arrange for fighter protection on passage to Rothesay. S.of A. 9 knots. (3) To arrange for lights to be shown as follows. T.B.R. in vicinity of R/V will be ordered by me. (Capt. S.7 2251A/30). R/V on 1/1 in 200° Lizard Head 5 miles with one following ship which will be in R/V from 0900A/1. BREDA or a trawler M/S. (2) Bombing restrictions as follows. (N.O.I.C. Falmouth 2326A/30 to JUNON, H.43, H.28, H.32, H.33, H.44.). F.O.S. 1859A/30. R/V Z 5 in 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles at 0900A/1. T.B.R. and lights have been ordered as follows. (Capt. S.7 2352A/30 to OTWAY, O.10).

/WALKER.....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.-Contd.

WALKER
VERITY
WITHERINGTON
ONSLOW
OFFA
MARNE.

R.A.(D) H.F. is requested to sail 3 destroyers to arrive Hvalfjord on 2/1 to relieve WALKER, VERITY and WITHERINGTON.
(2) On relief, WALKER, VERITY, and WITHERINGTON are to proceed to Scapa.
(C.in C. H.F. 1921A/30).
Your 1921A/30th. Intend sailing Capt. D.17 in ONSLOW with OFFA MARNE p.m. 31st for Hvalfjord.
(R.A.D.H.F. 2315A/30 to C.in C. H.F.).

Operations.

Operation "Anklet"

Following is a repetition of S.O. Force J's 1215/29.
(A.C.O.S. 0420A/30 to 6th D.F.).
LAMERTON detached with 27 German prisoners and 2 Quislings. Also Sub. Lieut. Billington with papers. Following Norwegian refugees embarked in other ships. 133 men, 68 women, 65 children.
A.C.O.S. acknowledge.
(S.O. Force J.1113/30 to Admty. A.C.O.S. Reptd. C.in C. H.F. and R.A.D.H.F.).
Your 1113/30. Acknowledged.
(A.C.O.S. 1430A/30 to S.O. Force J.).

Denmark Strait Patrol.

Intend to sail to relieve NORFOLK cruiser WHITE at 2100N/30.
(BERWICK 0908N/30 to A.C.I.C.).

Biscay S/M Patrol.

Large ship reported at 2255A/29 in about 046° N. 001° 30' W. course 270°, 15 knots. Object in Bay of Biscay area is now to attack and then report enemy ships of all descriptions.
(F.O.S. 1008A/30 to S/M's Area A).

Channel patrol.

Night 30/31. 3 A/S Trawlers patrolling between St. Helens and Beachy Head.
(C.in C, Portsmouth 1427A/30).

East Coast Patrols.

HAMBLEDON is to be sailed as requisite visibility permits to take up patrol "C" tonight, thence proceeding to Humber.
(C.in C. Nore. 1450A/30).
Night 30/31
Q.E. (3) Patrol, shifting to Q.E. (6A) at 0230/31- M.G.B's 319. 325.
Q.E. (4A) Patrol, shifting to Q.E.(7) at 0230/31 -M.L's 149, 201.
(C.in C. Nore 1930A/30).

Dover patrols.

Night of 30/31. Trawler patrols cancelled owing to weather. M.L. 139 on O.D. 6 and 7 combined.
(V.A. Dover 1649A/39).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

Escorts for Force "J".

My 1737/29. First sortie two aircraft only, third joining after about one hour.
(C.in C. Rosyth 0816/30 to S.O. Force "J").
My 1737/29. 2nd sortie should arrive 1100, then no further sortie today owing to weather at base.
(C.in C. Rosyth 1025/30 to S.O. Force "J" Rep. C.in C. H.F.).

Mining.

Tees Hartlepool.

Ports of Tees and Hartlepool closed owing to suspected minelaying. Estimated time of opening noon 30th.
(N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 0014/30). My 1004/30 Ports of Tees and Hartlepool will be closed daily for 12 days from 1800 approx. to noon approx. following day.
(N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 1114/30).

Operation "QO".

Operation "QO" cancelled today owing to fog.
(C.in C. Nore 0705/30 to M.S.9.).
Your 2156A/29. Assuming that high percentage search only of overlapping areas of QZX 384 and 403 is required vide para. 1 of Nore No. 0803A/18 dated 1st December 1941, my proposals are as follows. Details.
(M.S.9., 1101A/30 to C.in C. Nore.)
Reply to his 1101/30.
(C.in C. Nore 1746A/30 to M/S 9.).

Tyne.

My 2230/29. Port of Tyne open.
(F.O.I.C. Tyne 1034/30).

Firth of Forth.

Latest searched channels Firth of Forth are as follows. Details.
(C.in C. Rosyth 1522/30).

Faroes mine clearance.

Comply with C.in C. H.F. 2231A/29.
(A.C.O.S. 1832A/30 to M/S 4).

High percentage search yesterday actually commenced at new Eastern limit proposed in C.in C. H.F's 2231/29 but only taken to original Western limit. On receipt of latter signal today search was extended to proposed new Western limit also. Only 2 mines found in yesterday's search, one well inside original area where Gap was suspected, other in unknown position as it was dragged in sweep. No mines found today. Intend completing search over whole new area and, if no mines are found in it, I consider Gap may be declared clear. Analysis of all positions in which mines have been swept definitely suggests the view those in S.N.6 have dragged towards S.N.66 and not that any line has been undetected.
R.A.(M)'s 2138/5/1 reporting severe weather

/conditions....

MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.-Contd.

Faroes mine clearance -Contd.	conditions at the time of laying S.N.6 supports this theory. (S.O. 4 M/S F. 2134A/30 to A.C.O.S.).
Spurn Point	Following eight magnetic mines detonated today by sweepers. Details. (F.O. Humber 1935A/30).

Enemy Intelligence.

Off Ile d'Oleron.	Large vessel reported at 2255A/29 in approx. 46° N. 01° 30' W. course 270° 15 knots. (F.O.S. 1008A/30 to S/M's Area A).
Brest.	Preliminary report of photographic R/C at 1430/30 shows GNEISENAU alongside T/B Station, SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN in usual docks. (D.D.I.C. 1818A/30).

Navigational.

Harwich.	Port closed owing to fog. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0815A/30).
Yarmouth	Port now open owing to improved visibility. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1432A/30).
Cape Orlov light.	Your 1618A/29. Cape Orlov light. Characteristic changed to flash white for 5 seconds every 2 minutes are 000° to 160° visibility 23 miles. Russian authorities state change will be for about 2 months. Admiralty please inform P.Q.7. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 1730C/30 to Admty. Rep. 1st M/S F.).

Casualties & Defects.

BURZA	Small gusset plate on 'A' bracket is torn and distorted, requiring docking for repair. Request this may be made good when vessel is in hand for condenser repairs. In view of this and my 1240/25/12 consider ship should not be employed on further service in present condition. (Capt. D. Greenock 1650A/30).

Shipping & Convoys.

W.S.15	My 0345/29. Y.3 will not now be ready for W.S.15. Y.1 will be reincluded. (2) Y.6 and Y.1 will embark at Liverpool on 9.1.42. (D.S.T. 0650/30). Convoy W.S.15 with Military personnel and stores for Middle East will be ready to leave U.K. for Freetown on 10/1. Composition and escorts. Details. (D.O.D.H. 1923A/30) See Lion Copy.

/When.....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

W.S.15. -Contd.

When ready for sea request you will sail NORMAN to Clyde.
NORMAN will form part of escort for W.S.15 to Freetown leaving U.K. on 10/1 as ordered by C.in C. W.A.
From Freetown she is to proceed at best speed to Capetown.
(D.O.D.H. 1649A/30 to F.O.I.C. Southampton).

Q.P.4.

My 1659C/29. State of affairs 0800C/30. STALIN completed bunkering. LENIN hampered by bad visibility, position 065° 06' N. 038° 33' E. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 1046C/30 to Admty. EDINBURGH).
My 1350C/30. LENIN's position at 1100C/30 065° 15' N. 038° 30' E., speed of advance 3 knots. Junction with STALIN should be made overnight when LENIN will bunker from TREKIEVE.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel 1805C/30 to Admty. EDINBURGH).

S.C.60

DAUPHIN not arrived.
(A.C.I.C. 1058N/30).

F.N.92

Postponed 24 hours owing to fog.
(C.in C. Rosyth 1101A/30).

S.C.59

Warmest congratulations on the safe arrival of your convoy S.C.59.
(C.in C. W.A. 1144A/30 to Rear-Admiral Rowley Conwy).

P.Q.7 B.

A.C.I.C's 1834A/28. CUMBERLAND, TARTAR, and ICARUS are to provide ocean escort for P.Q.7 B.
(C.in C. H.F. 1353A/30 to CUMBERLAND).
Your 1353A/30 understood.
(CUMBERLAND 1641N/30 to C.in C. H.F.).

P.Q.7.

If SALAMANDER and BRITOMART have not joined by 1200Z/31 local escort is to return to Iceland, reporting P.C.S. of convoy when well clear.
(C.in C. H.F. 1414A/30 to HUGH WALPOLE).

LOCH GARRY.

Your 1538A/29. CAPE PORTLAND sailed for R/V.
(S.O.N.P. 1747A/30 to A.C.O.S.).

/ P.Q.....

MOST SECRET.

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Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. -Contd.

P.Q. and Q.P Convoy routes.

Owing to weather and lack of serviceing facilities at Hvalfjord serious delays are being experienced in the sailing of P.Q.Convoys.
(2) These difficulties could largely be overcome if P.Q. Convoys sailed for a U.K. Port direct to N. Russia and it is under consideration that P.Q. Convoys should sail from Loch Ewe proceeding west of the Faroes escorted by the trawlers now employed as local escorts as far as the vicinity of Seidisfjord where H.F. escorts would take over the convoy.
(4) It is also suggested that Q.P. ships on arrival at Seidisfjord should be escorted to Loch Ewe instead of Kirkwall.
(5) Request your remarks.
(A.C.N.S.T. 1926A/30 to C.in C. H.F. C.in C. W.A.).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Forcing of Straits by GNEISENAU.

Your 1711/28 (Possibility of GNEISENAU attempting passage of Straits of Gibraltar) Action taken by Force H. and local air and surface forces to guard against this possibility reduces (?weight of our) offensive. Any further information or assessments of probable break out will be welcome.
(S.O. Force H., 1055A/30 to Admty.)
Your 1055A/30. Admty. 1818A/30 (Brest reconnaissance report) should enable you to resume your local offensive.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 2329/30 to S.O. Force H.)

Cable Operation.

Situation at 2005A/30, MIRROR escorted by COLTSFOOT cable operations vicinity of Fayal.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1220A/30 to N.A.S.)

Flights Over Sunken Enemy Tanker, Spain.

British aircraft still flying over sunken German tanker BEMSO in Ensenada de Cino. Germans confirm abandoning vessel. Minister of Marine requests aircraft desist for fear of serious incidents.
(N.A. Madrid, 1425/30 to Admty.)

GERMANIA (German)

At Teneriffe, reported to have received a further supply of oil fuel during past month transferred from CHARLOTTE SCHLIEMANN.
(D.S. 847.)

SHAHRISTAN survivors.

Your 1026A/30 (Request information re disposal of survivors ex S.S. SHAHRISTAN - see South Atlantic) Military Survivors left Lisbon for Gibraltar 3/12.
(N.A. Lisbon 1732/30 to Admty.)

Landing Craft Gibraltar.

Govr., Gibraltar, 1800/30 to W.O.

BATORY.

My 1500/29 (N.T.in W.D.) Sailed BATORY escorted by VANOC, BADSWORTH.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1820A/30 to Admty., C. in C. W.A.)
My 0132A/30 not to Admty., C. in C. W.A. Remain in company with BATORY onward from position C. as instructed by C. in C. W.A.
(F.O.C.N.A. 2142A/30 to VANOC, BADSWORTH.)

/French ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic - contd.

French Shipping. Gibraltar 0930 minesweeper ENGAGEANTE, S.S. FAUZON ROUBAISIEN, both laden, VOLONTAIRE, ASTREE, D'ARTAGNAN, all full, westbound. (S.O.I. Gib., 1847A/30 to Admty. etc.) D.O.R. 1/1.

South Atlantic.

"Q" Report 29/12. R.A.S.A.D. 2211Z/29. Cancellation which appears to be genuine of CITY OF LISLE's Q Q Q message has been made. (C. in C. S.A. 0330Z/30 to ASTURIAS.)

SHAHRISTAN survivors. My 1610/18/11. Request latest information about disposal of 21 military survivors ex S.S. SHAHRISTAN stated by N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada to have been sent from there to Lisbon on 9/11. (Head of M. 1026A/30 to C. in C. S.A., F.O.C.N.A. N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, N.A. Lisbon.) See reply 1732/30 under N. Atlantic.

WOODRUFF. Has fractured forward LP cylinder cover beyond repair. Cylinder is being (? blanked) off and ship should then be able to maintain about 9 or 10 knots. Intend to sail ship with SL 97. (C. in C. S.A. 1151Z/30 to Admty. (R) Capt. D.18.)

Enemy M/V D/F bearings at 2036 and 2219/29 suggest German merchant ship within 150 miles of 29° S. 22° W. probably northbound. Reliability 55%: within 500 miles, reliability 85%. (C. in C. S.A., 1143Z/30 to S.A. Sqdn.)

Freetown, Water. Water situation at Freetown is serious. All measures are to be taken to ensure that merchant vessels take in as much water as possible at other ports and distil on passage. It will not be possible to meet large demands at Freetown. (C. in C. S.A. 1149Z/30 to N.O.I.C's Bathurst, Takoradi, Lagos.)

AMARANTHUS. Your 2011/22. Intend to include Item 173 A.F.O. (A Series) 646/41 Extension to forecastle and modification of bridge in AMARANTHUS. This will entail duration of refit 8 weeks. (D.O.D.(F) 1245A/30 to C. in C. S.A.)

/U.S. Movements ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - contd.

U.S. Movements. My 1201Z/24 to DEVONSHIRE only and my 1243Z/22 not to DEVONSHIRE. U.S. Cruiser CINCINNATI and U.S. Destroyer JOUETT left Pernambuco a.m./28. (C. in C. S.A. 1255C/30 to DEVONSHIRE, CANTON, CILICIA.)

DEVONSHIRE CANTON. Following is a repetition of my 1301Z/30 (N.T.in W.R.) N.A. Rio de Janeiro repeated Admty., DEVONSHIRE, R.A.S.A.D., CANTON, CILICIA.
Request you obtain permission for DEVONSHIRE and CANTON to obtain about 2000 tons and 1000 tons oil fuel respectively at Pernambuco between 2nd and 5/1. Exact dates will be signalled later.
Request early reply.
(C. in C. S.A. 1303Z/30 to Admty. etc.)
It looks as though between 4/1 and 5/1 might be a fruitful period in your patrol area. Hope to arrange for DEVONSHIRE and CANTON to fuel at Pernambuco on 2/1 and 5/1 respectively. You should adjust movements in time required.
(C. in C. S.A., 1521Z/30 to DEVONSHIRE, CILICIA, CANTON.

ENGADINE. In view of your 1639/29/12, does para 3 of your 1216/19/12 re transfer of Albacore and Sea Hurricanes still apply?
(F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1455Z/30 to Admty) See 2144/30

Falklands Defences. A.M.0107A/26. Would it be possible to rush out one or more long range 6 inch guns to strengthen coast defence of Falkland Isles?
(C. in C. S.A. 1601Z/30 to Admty.)

BIRMINGHAM ASTURIAS BULOLO. Your 1401Z/27 addressed R.A.S.A.D. only and my 1731Z/27. Intend to proceed Falkland Is. in BIRMINGHAM leaving Rio de Janeiro a.m./1 and showing BIRMINGHAM off Deseado. E.T.A. Falkland Is. 7/1. Intend ASTURIAS and BULOLO to continue as in my 1651/23 pending reply to my 1731Z/27.
(R.A.S.A.D. 1602/30 to C. in C. S.A.)
BIRMINGHAM wearing Flag of R.A.S.A.D. arrived Rio de Janeiro 1230 G.M.T./30 and leaves 1230 G.M.T./1 for Falkland Isles.
(R.A.S.A.D. 1711Z/30 to Admty., C. in C. S.A.)

BRILLIANT ABOSSO. Departures 30th BRILLIANT escorting (?ABOSSO).
(N.O.I.C. Takoradi 1615Z/30 to Admty., C. in C. S.A.)
Leave ABOSSO and return to Freetown at best speed.
(C. in C. S.A. 1703Z/30 to BRILLIANT.)

/BULOLO ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - contd.

BULOLO. Arrived Buenos Aires 29th, intend leaving 1130Z/31. (BULOLO, 1632Z/30 to Admty. etc.)

Cable Operation. Your 2027/28. Extremely desirable CAMBRIA should return to her South American Station as soon as possible after repair Accra-Lagos cable. Repairs (d) and (e) and diversion (c) are scheduled for LADY DENISON PENDER who has requisite cable on board and is due at Capetown for onward routeing to Freetown shortly. (D.S.D. 1736A/30 to C. in C. S.A.)

Information of U.S. Task Forces. B.A.D. 1221R/11/12 para 3 and 4. Unless U.S. Force(s) are going to assume responsibility for area to westward of proposed dividing line very shortly would it be possible to arrange with Opnav that I get earlier information of intended movement(s) of U.S. Task Force(s) in South Atlantic so that movement of my Patrol Force can be co-ordinated to best advantage?
(2) In my opinion, forces whose object is interception of southbound raiders and northbound Axis shipping are more economically employed working an area than taking a cast into mid-Atlantic.
(3) The ideal would be if clearance force could patrol in particular areas on particular dates to be intimated in advance. I could patrol these or adjacenet areas with my limited force so as to fill in gaps in time and space.
(C. in C. S.A. 1919Z/30 to Admty.)

ENGADINE INDOMITABLE My 1216/19, 1639/29 and C. in C. S.A. 1845/23. (1) All damaged aircraft in ENGADINE are to be transferred to Wynberg. (2) INDOMITABLE should embark as many of her reserve Sea Hurricanes from ENGADINE as can be stowed, without prejudice to future operations. (3) ENGADINE should then be sailed for Suez with remaining cargo whose composition should be reported on sailing. (D.N.A.D. 2144A/30 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown, ENGADINE, INDOMITABLE.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

APHIS, bombardment.

Tobruk. My 2109/29. APHIS sailed 0715/30 to carry out para.1 of C. in C's 2021/27 (N.T. in W.R.)
(S.O. Force I. 0907/30 to C. in C. Med., etc.)
Unable to carry out bombardment owing to 2 guns Bardia south point straddling at 1800 yards. APHIS fired 10 rounds per gun. B.N.O. Tobruk pass to N.L.O. 30th Corps.
(APHIS, 1741B/30 to S.O. Force I.)

Convoy A.T.9.

Two M. type A/C have been sent to assistance of convoy codeword "Vowel" at 0715. 6000 k/cs.
(Alexandria W/T 1102B/30 to FARNDALE.)
Fighter aircraft have been despatched to your assistance. 2 short ranged Hurricanes 1345, 1630, 1645 till dusk SOLAR R T 441 k/cs.
(WITHERINGTON 1151B/30 to HEYTHROP.)
Have been attacked by 2 torpedo bombers driven off by gunfire. No fighter escort seen today. My position 032° 10' N. 025° 18' E.
(HEYTHROP 1448B/30 to Tobruk.)
Following has been read: HEYTHROP. Two short range Hurricanes have been sent to assist convoy codeword "Solar" from 1645 to 1745. 6000 k/cs.
(Fighter H.Q. W. Desert, 1615B/30.)

Black Sea Situation, 16/12.

Following is repetition N.L.O. Black Sea 1405C/16 (begins) Addressed Admty. from N.L.O. Black Sea. 1. Sevastopol holding firm. Approx. 6 enemy divisions attacking mostly German. 2. 1 enemy division and 1 brigade Roumanian Cavalry on Kerch Peninsula. 3. German Fleet inactive except for some submarine activity. 4. Russian morale always good being high as result of recent land successes. 5. News hard to obtain in Tuapse.(Ends.
(Adm. Miles 1118D/30 to Admty.)

Libya, Situation, Defence.

Ref. C. in C. India's 21703/G of 24/12 para. one. 1. Must emphasize that success in Libya only reduces our defensive commitments temporarily. The enemy can come again and we must be prepared to meet a similar scale of attack at some future date. 2. Distances and limited communications prohibit the rapid reinforcements of Libya from Egypt particularly by armd. forces. Therefore bulk of garrison must be located permanently in Libya. 3. Moreover, we will be faced with the protection of vulnerable line of sea communications to N. African ports involving Naval, Air and A.A. resources.
(C. in C. ME.. 1125/30 to W.O.)

/Movements ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - contd.

Movements. Arrival 29/12 AJAX, ARROW, CARLISLE, DIDO, FOXHOUND, GURKHA, KINGSTON, NESTOR, NAPIER, MAORI, KHEIR EL DINE. Departure 29/12 KIPLING, UPRIGHT, LEGION, ABDIEL, FARNDALE, KLO. Arrival 30/12 NIZAM.
(S.O.I. Alexandria 1130B/30 to A.I.G.74, Admty.)

INDOMITABLE. Admty. 1639A/29. Request you will inform me earliest date INDOMITABLE can reach Socotra area. N.O.i/c Simonstown pass to INDOMITABLE.
(C. in C. Med., 1144B/30 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown.)

UPHOLDER UPRIGHT. My 1159B/28 not to Capt.(S) 8. Cancel reference to UPHOLDER and Area L. Intend sailing UPHOLDER p.m./31 for Area M, N. of Messina, S. of 039° and E. of 015°. UPRIGHT leaves p.m./1 for Area L, 034° 21' 011° 47' - 345° - 30 - 60.
(Capt. S.10 1155B/30 to Capt. S.1.)

Air Report. 1. Cyrenaica. My Opsum 579 (Day 28/12) 4 S.79 torpedo bombers were engaged over convoy by single Martlet which shot down first, forced 2 to jettison, and was itself shot down by fourth which was however prevented from aiming accurately. Martlet pilot killed. Day 29/12. 3 Squadrons Blenheims including Free French bombed enemy positions Bardia obtaining many hits. No activity seen in Bardia. R/C reported 3 small ships 3 lighters close inshore Ras El Aali, 26 miles West Agelia where supplies now apparently being lightered ashore to temporary jetty. Also at Ras Ypnuf. Also 500 MT dispersed round jetty.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1214/30.)

S/Ms for Far East, Admty. 1729/22. Spare crew will be sent in these vessels. Repair party cannot be supplied by MEDWAY without relief. Request you provide repair party at Singapore from ratings ex PRINCE OF WALES and REPULSE. F.O.S's (?Admty) 1729A/22 states TRUSTY and TRUANT are to form a nucleus. Consider repair party should therefore be size used for 6 Subs.
(C. in C. Med., 1230B/30 to C. in C. E.F.)

American S/Ms. C. in C. Med. 1216B/26. As I hope that American S Class after modification will prove suitable for operational work in certain parts of Mediterranean where Italian A/S measures are not severe, request whether in view of changed situation the American Authorities are still prepared to transfer a further S class submarine for manning with Jugo Slav personnel.
(F.O.S. 1242A/30 to Admty.)

/QUEEN OLGA ...

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - contd.

QUEEN OLGA. Your (1523 ? 1525)/13. Greek destroyer QUEEN OLGA now completed before SPETSAI, and expects to arrive Alexandria end of Jan. Gun and mounting being shipped to Alexandria, which is presumably 3" and not 4.7, will be mounted in her. (C. in C. Med., 1250B/30 to Admty.)

KINGSTON NIZAM. Leave Alexandria 1300B/31 proceed direct to carry out A/S search in Gulf of Sollum during night of 30/31 joining C.S.7 a.m./31st. (F.O. 7 C.S., 1401B/30 to C. in C. Med., R.A. Alex., etc.)

Black Sea, Russian Landings. D.C.N.S. in Kuibishev informed Cmdr. Ambrose today that landing operations on the Kerch Peninsula started on 26/12 and are evidently continuing. Theodosia occupied by Units from the Soviet 51 and 55 armies. Other landings attempted N. and S. of Kerch. Northern landing from sea of Azov postponed owing to weather but may be in progress now. Southern landing at Kamisf Burun successful. These operations planned quite 2 weeks ago when Germans stated to withdraw certain units from Kerch Peninsula. (Adm. Miles 1545D/30 to Admty.)

Bulgarian Shipping. Arrived Istanbul 29/12 from Burgos STARIYA VOLK (auxiliary sailing vessel) and RUDNITCHAR, both Bulgarian.
(S.O.I. Istanbul, 1548B/30.)

German Ship. Arrival 30/12 German steamer to load zinc ore.
(Cartagena T H I 1600/30 to M. of W.T.)

RAMB IV and further attacks on hospital ships. Your 1546A/19. (A) Disembarked before capture. Present whereabouts unknown. (B) (1) AMRA on 7/8, see A.L. M.015271/41 of 11/10. (B) (11) RAMB IV on 27/11. (111) SOMERSETSHIRE on 7/12, see Med. 2513/543/27 of 14/12. None of these attacks considered deliberate. (C) There is unfortunately no good reason for retaining ship. When released, consider she should be filled with Italians of non-military age, ex Benghazi and sent to Italy.
(C. in C. Med., 1601B/30 to Admty.)

A.S.V. Patrol. Following received (Begins) Grebe repeated C. in C. Med. R.A. 7th C.S. KINGSTON from 201 Group. A.199 30/12. One Swordfish to be in position at end of Swept Channel at 1800 (275 Alexandria 25) and carry out A S V patrol with naval force till 2030 course 316°, speed 21 knots. Land at Burg-el-Arab. 203 Sqdn. to arrange night flying facilities. T.O.O. 1435/30. (Ends)
(R.A. Alexandria 1611B/30 to R.A. 7th C.S., KINGSTON.)

/Malta ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - contd.

Malta Air Report.

No damage from enemy raids night 28/29.
29th. 1410 hours 5 Me.109s machine gunned naval units and rescue launch. Hurricane probably destroyed 1 Me.109. 2 Hurricanes missing and not found by subsequent search. 12 other raiders bombers and Me.109s attacked Luqa. Some damage to aircraft, full reports not yet available.
Night 29/30. 1832 to 0221 hrs 5 raiders approached, 3 crossed coast, bombs land, 3 soldiers killed 4 injured. 3 Albacores laid 3 mines outside Zuara harbour while 1 Albacore as diversion dropped bombs, flares, Zuara Town.
30/12 3 alerts.
0750 hours, 12 Me.109s crossed coast, driven back by Hurricanes. 0942 hours, approx. 40 fighters 6 JU.88s attacked Ta Kali, Luqa and dockyard. Exact damage to aircraft not yet established. One JU.88 damaged by A.A., one by Navy. Hurricanes intercepted 2 JU.88s, destroyed one probable, one damaged. 1253 hours, 12 raiders fighters and bombers crossed coast and withdrew. No bombs.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1700/30, 1705/30.)

Air Report.

Night 28/29. My Op. Summary 580. FAA Albacores bombed small ships off Ras El, Aali and MT in vicinity previously located by Air R/C. Bombs fell near ships and probably damaged Jetty and some M.T.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1729/30.)

Air Patrols.

Sunderland arranged for A S V R 2030/30 to 0545/31 not now available. One Sunderland will carry out A/S patrol for "Motor" from 0745/31 until dusk. one Swordfish will carry out A/S patrol ahead of "Motor" from 0545/31 until relieved by Sunderland.
(C. in C. Med. 1835/30 to C.S.7.)

Bardia.

Day 29/12. During day three Blenheims squadrons continued attacks on enemy positions inside Bardia perimeter, obtaining several direct hits. R/C reported 3 small ships, 3 lighters inshore Ras El Aali where 500 M.T. dispersed near jetty. No land or sea movements Bardia.
(C. in C. M.E. 1850/30.)

ABDIEL.

My 2049/29 not to all. On completion proceed Port Said for transit Canal and passage Aden with moderate despatch thence as ordered by C. in C. E.F.
(C. in C. Med. 1850B/30 to ABDIEL)

/Your 1657A/29 ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

ABDIEL - contd.

Your 1657A/29. ABDIEL is embarking outfit mark XIV mines with flooders as mark XVII mines cannot be made available without delaying her sailing. (C. in C. Med., 1940B/30 to Admty.)

TRIUMPH R of P.

Part one Special Operation cpmpleted. Following information received. 20,000 Paratroops Messaria Plain, Crete. 300 Light Tanks, Light Mechanical Transport and large quantity Aircraft torpedoes Heraklion. Source considered reliable. Weather report.
(TRIUMPH 2121B/30 to C. in C. Med.)
N.I.D. Comment. Information concerning German forces in Crete is quite untrue. Total forces in Crete are not believed greatly to exceed 20,000; there may be a few paratroops among them. It is possible that a small number of tanks may now be in Crete in the process of attempted transfer to Libya but the number 300 far exceeds all possibilities and would represent from one to two armoured divisions.

Libya Coast Bombardments.

Two enemy Coast Defence Guns, calibre 105 m.ms. position 520 539 56 effectively engaged by APHIS. Army do not consider AJAX shooting sufficiently important if it involves serious risk to ship. (N.L.O. 30 Corps 2218B/30 to C. in C. Med., AJAX, C.S.7.)

Libya Air Ops.

4. Night 29/30. Albacores bombed small ships and M.T. Ras El Aali. Near misses on ships, M.T. and jetty probably damaged.
(C. in C. M.E. 2247/30 to W.O.)

UPHOLDER, attack by own A/C.

My 1543B/28 (N.T.in W.D.) Cancel reference UPHOLDER. Lieut. Comm. Wanklyn re-assumed command to date 29th vice Norman who was wounded by fighter aircraft attack on UPHOLDER during exercise off Malta. Lieut. Norman hospital with several flesh wounds none serious, probably returns to duty within 4 weeks. UPHOLDER proceeds on patrol tomorrow 31st.
(Capt. S. 10, 2315B/30 to C. in C. Med.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

W.S.14, CERES. — Your 1301/26. CERES arrived Durban 29/12 and will be available for this duty if required. (C. in C. E.I., 0616Z/30 to C. in C. S.A.)

Communications. — Owing to enemy action the cable facilities to the East have been greatly reduced and furthermore are now largely dependent on retention of Cocos Is. (ii) Requested that Cable and Wireless may be approached with a view to them arranging with Indian Radio and Cable Communication Co. for latter's radio link between Bombay and Tokyo to be now diverted to some station in Australia. (C. in C. E.I., 1204Z/30, to Admty.).

LAOMEDON. — Your 1304Z/17/12. Regret LAOMEDON can only be employed in this way temporarily as she will be required for laying defences at other bases later on. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1335A/30 to C. in C. E.I.)

China.

Malaya Report. — Johore. 18 enemy type 97 aircraft bombed and machine gunned Kluang aerodrome at 1130, casualties slight. No bombs on aerodrome. Singapore. 3 air raids on Singapore Island evening 29/12. (Adv. H.Q., Malaya, 0345/30).

K. 14, enemy ships sunk, 23/12. — Please pass to C.Z.M. My 0402/24, not to C.Z.M. Neth. S/M K.14, Lt. Cdr. P.A.Mulock Van-Der-Vores Bik, operating in British Sphere but under C.Z.M's operational control, shadowed enemy force approaching Kuching on afternoon of 23/12. In the evening he entered very shallow water and sank 3 troop ships and one tanker in spite of an escort of one cruiser and 2 destroyers. K.14 was heavily attacked with depth charges but was unhurt. (C. in C. E.F., 0435Z/30, to Admty. (R) B.N.L.O. Batavia).

Air Raids. Singapore. — Four air raids Singapore Island night 29/30. Total enemy aircraft involved 30. Temporary petrol dump Atrbuller Camp, Alexandra, set alight but no damage to M.T. lines or other petrol dumps. No other damage and only 4 casualties reported. (Adv. H.Q. Singapore, 0611/30 to W.O. etc.)

/Allied ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 30.12.1941. Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. - contd.

Allied Co-operation. Following from Chiefs of Staff No. F.E.65. Your 1130/29. Whole question of inter allied machinery is receiving urgent consideration on highest level at Washington. You will be notified as soon as decisions are reached.
(W.O., 1250/30 to C. in C. F.E.,)

U.S. Pacific Fleet. A.M.1815A/23. Following changes in disposition:-
Battleships. PENNSYLVANIA at San Francisco. MARYLAND, TENNESSEE at Bremerton. Aircraft Carrier. YORKTOWN due San Diego 30/12.
8" Cruiser. LOUISVILLE at San Francisco.
6" Cruisers. ST. LOUIS due San Francisco 31/12. DETROIT due San Francisco 5/1. CONCORD at Mare Island. RICHMOND, TRENTON due San Diego 30/12.
(D.O.D.(F) 1647A/30 to C. in C. E.F., N.Z.N.B., A.C.N.B., N.S.H.Q., Ottawa).

R.D.F. ratings ex ship sunk. Admty. 1721/12. All R.D.F. Officers and ratings ex PRINCE OF WALES and REPULSE should be retained against future requirements, being temporarily disposed of as desired. Suggest as many ratings as possible be distributed additional in ships fitted R.D.F. (D.S.D. 1740A/30 to C. in C. E.F.)

Penang. Details of evacuation and demolitions.
(G.O.C., Malaya, 2118/30 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.

Singapore Raids. Daily Op. Summ. up to 1030Z/30. Singapore Island. Three bombing attacks night 29/30. Total 30 enemy Aircraft. Very slight damage.
(A.H.Q., F.E., 2355/30).

America & West Indies.

Dispositions. Estimated positions of H.M. and Allied Ships at 1800 G.M.T/30.

Ship.	Position	Course	Speed.
MARSDALE	39°N, 43°W.	Patrol	Blank
MARON	38°N, 43°W.	Patrol	Blank
ALBATROSS	10°N, 41°W.	273°	10
DEVONSHIRE) CANTON) CILICIA)	07°N, 38°W.	Patrol	Blank
ASTURIAS	18°3, 35°W.	Patrol	Blank
Convoy C.T.8) ROCKINGHAM)	46°N, 54°W.	275°	12

/Correction ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 30.12.1941. Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

Dispositions. (contd.)

Correction to A.T. 0935Z/29.

Ship.	Position.	Course	Speed
ALBATROSS	09½° N. 37° W.	273°	10

(D.O.D.(F) 0920Z/30 to Opnav amended 1159Z/30).

Walrus, ALBATROSS. /immediately on arrival at

Subject to Admty. approval one Walrus of 710 Squadron with Crew and maintenance ratings is to be disembarked from ALBATROSS/Trinidad. N.O.I.C. Trinidad is requested to arrange for shipment in Oiler BROOMDALE in accordance with C. in C. S.A. 1317Z/28. If available an Aircraft from R.N.A.S. Piarco may be loaded in BROOMDALE now in order to save time and ALBATROSS Aircraft used in replacement. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1012Q/30 to ALBATROSS, N.O.I.C. Trinidad) Approved. (A.C.N.S.(F) 2254A/31 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

Suspicious Ships, Easter Is.

Confidential information received from Chilian Naval source reports 2 unidentified Warships sighted off Easter Island at 1800/28. They were long way off Island and steering west. (N.A.Santiago de Chile, 1132Q/30 to Admty.) My 1132Q. Ships were sighted to Southward of Island Distance 10 miles approx. (N.A. Santiago de Chile, 1627/30 to Admty.)

U.S. Forces.

A.T. 1636A/17. Following changes U.S. Forces on A. & W.I.Station since A.T. 2238A/23. Battleships. ARKANSAS at Argentia, NEW YORK ready late January. WASHINGTON and NORTH CAROLINA in Key West Area. Aircraft Carriers. WASP at Norfolk, RANGER at Bermuda, HORNET in Key West Area, LONG ISLAND due Argentia 30/12. 8" Cruisers. QUINCY and VINCENNES at Trinidad. 6" Cruisers. PHILADELPHIA due Argentia 30/12. NASHVILLE en route to Norfolk, BROOKLYN at New York. (D.O.D.(F) 1302A/30 to C. in C. H.F., C. in C.A.W.I. N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

Washington Report.

Washops 20. (i) Philippine Islands. Gen.Macarthur reports on 28/12. 63 bombers attacked Manila, severe damage. 29/12 contact successfully broken off in south and hope to hold in north until both U.S. forces make contact in San Fernando area. Heavy air attacks continue.
(ii) Hawaii. Air route to Australia via Canton Suva Noumea open 28/12.
(iii) Borneo. Observer Bandoeng reports Japanese plane bombed Tarakan, Borneo, 28/12.
(J.S.M. Washington, 1331R/30 to Admty, etc.)

RAMAPO Suspicious vessel.

Two U.S. patrol planes were fired on 4 times by a suspect vessel which appeared to be trailing U.S. tanker RAMAPO about 500 miles 245° Point Lomas (San Diego) p.m./28th. Dropped four bombs without

/result ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

RAMAPO Suspicious vessel. (contd.)	result. Trying to regain contact daylight 29th. (B.A.D., 1537R/30 to Admty.)
Suspicious Oil Barge.	Master Norwegian S.S.NOVASH reports sighting 22/12 in 55.40 N. 30.19 W. Square Steel oil barge approx. 400 tons D.W., black hull, red and green deckworks, marked Brothers No.6. (C.O.A.C., 1559Z/30 to N.S.H.Q., Admty, Opnav.)
Lourenco Marques.	Your 1615/20. Following received from N.O.I.C. Simonstown (begins). Matter is still under discussion with U.S.N.A. Capetown. While proposal is most desirable to relieve congestion U.S. N.A. is not in favour of ships carrying Lease Lend cargoes calling at Lourenco Marques for security reasons. Further signal will be made. C.S.A. Lourenco Marques is able to route onwards if required. 1545/29. (Ends). (D.T.D. 1636A/30 to B.A.D.)
BURWELL.	My 1236/26 (N.T. in W.R.) Intend to direct BURWELL to call at Halifax after refit to complete with 12 pounder ammunition. U.S. 4 inch is being provided at Boston. (B.A.R.M. 1738R/30 to C.C.N.F.)
German Heavy Units.	Preliminary report of photographic R/C at 1430/30 shows GNEISENAU alongside T/B Station, SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN in usual docks. (D.D.I.C. 1814A/30 to B.A.D.)
Casablanca Shipping.	French and Spanish Movements Casablanca 27/12 (B.2) (B.A.D., 1941R/30, to Admty.)
ROXBOROUGH.	Your 1345R/27. ROXBOROUGH will be sailed to arrive Charleston at 1200 Zone 5 time on 6/1 in accordance with your instructions. (F.O.N.F., 2033Z/30 to B.A.R.M.)
Shipping Lights.	Instructions issued that U.S. coastwise shipping may use dimmed navigational lights in areas where submarine raiders or aircraft are not likely to be met. Lights to be dimmed to two mile visibility with only one masthead light. Ship otherwise to be darkened. (Opnav, 2146/30 to Admty. etc.)

MOST SECRET.

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30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand.

Japanese A/C. R/C. Timor Occupation.

My 2031Z/26. Japanese aircraft sighted over New Guinea mainland 28/12 namely at Salamaua Lae and Madang. Also over Nauru 29/12. Attitude of local Portuguese administration towards occupation Portuguese Timor has shown no improvement. Master and crew of NANYEI MARU (Tender for Palao-(?Dilli) flying boat service) have been (?taken) into custody at (?Dilli).
(A.C.N.B., 0021Z/30 to Admty. etc.)

Shipping Route.

Your 0551Z/29 my 0955M/19. As protection of shipping in Pacific is under control of U.S. Authorities suggest vessels be (?routed) South of Chatham Islands.
(N.Z.N.B., 0928M/30 to A.C.N.B.)

AQUITANIA, HOBART, D.M.I.

Your 0336Z. On completion para. 4 (c). It is estimated machine gun btn., A.I.F. and R.A.A.F. reinforcement ex AQUITANIA could arrive Singapore about 21/1. M/T for foregoing could arrive 24/1 in M.S.1, if HOBART is not retained by you for escort of D.M.1. In event of you desiring HOBART for escort of D.M.1, M.S.1, would not arrive in Singapore until about 29/1. Either alternative is acceptable Ottawa to Naval Board Melbourne, but request your view observing troops ex AQUITANIA will be without their M/T for an additional 5 days, if you retain HOBART for escort of D.M.1.
(A.C.N.B., 1222Z/30 to C. in C. E.F.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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U BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

29/12. Unreliable estimate of U-Boat in approx. 063° N. 002° W. on 29/12. (C. in C. H.F., 1027A/30 to S.O. Force J., Capt. D.6.)

Estimated approximate positions of U.Boats. (D.D.I.C. 1405A/30, 1407A/30).

1720. I consider target with which I am in contact is a S/M position 090 Pentland Skerries 6. (SCALBY WYKE, 1720/30 to Kirkwall W/T.)
Proceed with despatch to position 90° Pentland Skerries 6 investigate suspected S/M. SCALBY WYKE searching in the vicinity (R.A.D.H.F., 1807A/30 to CALPE (R) A.C.O.S., C. in C. H.F.)
Motor Launch 228 and CALPE joining you. (A.C.O.S. 1810A/30 to SCALBY WYKE).
My 1755/30 SCALBY WYKE lost contact and proceeded at 1750. Request CALPE may investigate at position given before returning to harbour. (A.C.O.S. 1855A/30 to R.A.D. H.F.)
If not in contact at 2230 return Scapa. Acknowledge. (R.A.D. H.F., 2114A/30 to CALPE).

Submarines Attacked.

By A/C (Med.) Have attacked one enemy submarine with bombs level and estimate 3 near misses O (?3) 10 kcs. 35.48 N., 20.08 E. on surface. (A/C K7TF. 1055/30).
My 1055. 2 DC 56 55 300 10 KT on surface returning to base. (A/C. K7TF 1200/30).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

North Atlantic.

A German plane is reported to have attacked SCOTTISH, on patrol off the Tagus this morning; no damage was caused.

Mediterranean.

There were further air attacks on Malta from 1622/30 to 0400/31. Some damage was caused at Kalafrana and Halfar.

Wellingtons last night bombed Salamis and Megalo Pefko Seaplane Bases and other targets at Salamis and Piraeus, and Heraklinn and Maleme Aerodromes.

AJAX escorted by 6 destroyers bombarded Bardia H.Q. last night, to synchronise with the attack of the army. APHIS attempted harassing bombardment of positions North of Bardia last night but was driven off by a coastal battery after firing 20 rounds.

East Indies.

The Officer Commanding Air Forces in Ceylon is to be responsible to A.O. C. in C. India for operational control, administration, training and efficiency of Air Forces in Ceylon; he is to accept general directif from C. in C. E.I. for operation of G.R. aircraft but is responsible for execution of directif. The primary roles of the air forces in Ceylon are co-operation with Naval and Military forces in that area, maintenance of sea communications and air defence of Ceylon. Naval aircraft either shore based or temporarily disembarked from carriers will be under the direct control of C. in C. E.I.

Mines are to be laid at Horsborough Atoll.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

China.

The following is an estimate of the shipping position in the Far East, to date 25/12;
(a) Presumed lost, 47 vessels of 78,276 tons.
(b) Known to be safe, 31 vessels of 94,802 tons.
(c) Between Shanghai, Hong Kong and South, or at Manila, of which part is still uncertain and part is known to be safe 20 vessels of 53,711 tons.
N.O.I.C. Hong Kong reported that all ships unable to leave Hong Kong district, amounting to 43,000 tons had been scuttled.

Bombs were dropped in the Naval base at Singapore this evening. It is reported that Senoko oil fuel depot was bombed on the nights of 29th and 31st; 4 tanks were slightly damaged.

Manila was uncovered by nightfall today.

8 U.S. aircraft today attacked an enemy naval concentration at Davao. 3 direct hits are claimed on a battleship, one destroyer was sunk and other naval units were hit.

New Zealand.

Kahulahi harbour and a few other places in Hawaii were lightly shelled last night presumably by a submarine; slight damage was caused at Hilo.

U-Boat Campaign.

Tanker CAR DITA, a straggler ahead of HX 166 was torpedoed this evening in approx. 59° 18' N. 12° 50' W. and was abandoned later. Capt. D.17 (ONSLOW) with MARNE and OFFA were ordered to carry out A/S sweeps passing through this position on passage to relieve RENOWN's destroyer screen; he reported at 2115/1 that CARDITA could be salved. Tugs have been sent. (CARDITA sunk at 0855A.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Clyde M/S Force.

At present there are in service between Glasgow and Greenock three L L Whalers, four baby L L drifters, and one skid drifter. Should river be mined at least eight M M/S vessels would be urgently required to assist in clearing dredged channel of river alone. (F.O.I.C.Glasgow 1031/31). Your 1031/31. Should this position arise the necessary M/S vessels will be temporarily reallocated with the command (C. in C. W.A., 1556A/31 to F.O.I.C.Glasgow).

Flag of C.S.10.

Flag of C.S.10 has been transferred to NIGERIA. (C.S.10 1555A/31 to C. in C. H.F.)

Co-operation with U.S.A.

U.S.Warship Emergency Signals.

Information given in Admiralty 776A/5th. November is supplemented as follows. Details. (D.S.D.1453A/31) ("A" Message 986A.)

Defence of U.K.

Thames Estuary A/A Defences.

Admiralty 1929A/23/9. Request you examine, in conjunction with A.A. Defence Commander, desirability of extending within the Estuary, A.A. cover and anti-minelaying defences, by provision of further Maunsell forts of new type which can be employed in depth between 0 and 9 fathoms M.L.W.S. and consist of layouts comprising - (a) 4 Heavy, 2 Bofors and 1 Searchlight with R.D.F. Control, or (b) 2 Bofors and 1 Searchlight.
4. Request you will forward by signal a rough estimate of probable requirements and detailed proposals including sites, later.
(D. of L.D. 2205A/31 to C. in C. Nore.)

Movements.

STURGEON.

My 1712A/30. Request you will sail STURGEON routed to comply with S.B.N.O. North Russia's 1128C/30 when alterations to ballast have been satisfactorily completed. (F.O.S.0113A/31 to A.C.O.S.)
(1) Intend sailing STURGEON escorted by STELLA PEGASI at 0945/1 passing West of Orkneys to position (A) 061° N. 003° 30' W. E.T.A. 0100/2. Then unescorted diving by day through 066° 30' N. 003° 30' W. (C) 071° 50' N. 011° 30' E. (D) 073° N. 024° E. Thence as ordered by S.B.N.O. North Russia. E.T.A. position. (D) 1700/8.
(3) Request S.B.R. as follows. (A.C.O.S. 1701A/31).

OTWAY. O.10.

At 0500A/1 intend to sail Z 5 from Falmouth to R/V at 0900A/1 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles with OTWAY

/and ...

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

OTWAY. O.10. (Contd.) and O.10 and escort them thence to arrive Rothesay 1600A/3. S. of A. 9 knots. C. in C. Plymouth is requested to arrange fighter protection. (F.O.I.C.Falmouth 1002A/31).

PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE LEOPOLD, PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE, FORESIGHT. Your 2215A/29. Intend sailing 0300/1. E.T.A. Scapa 0900/1. (N.O.I.C. Invergordon 1043/31 to C. in C. H.F.)

RESOLUTION. Admiralty's 1648A/22 and 1259A/27. Intend to sail RESOLUTION to arrive Clyde a.m.8/1. (C. in C. H.F. 1123A/31).

JUNON. H.28, H.32, H.33, H.34, H.43. On 1/1 intend to sail BREDA and NIGHTHAWK at 0600A and PLADDER at 0800A to 200° Lizard Head 5 miles. There vessels will R/V from 0900A onwards with six submarines returning from south westwards. BREDA will detail trawlers to escort submarines as necessary to Falmouth, remaining herself at the R/V until the last S/M has been met. C. in C. Plymouth is requested to arrange fighter protection. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1136A/31).

MANCHESTER CITY, JAY. My 1126/29. When ready for sea, C. in C. W.A. is requested to sail MANCHESTER CITY (Controlled Mine Base Ship) loaded with controlled mines and equipment to Freetown in an O.S. convoy.
3. C. in C. S.A. is requested to arrange for onward passage to Durban.
4. MANCHESTER CITY will require a layer and JAY is only vessel available. It is suggested JAY be retained in vicinity of Durban until arrival of MANCHESTER CITY. My 1249/11/10 refers. (D.T.M. 1249A/31).

S/M Movements. F.O.(S) 1859A/30. (A) Following movements are to be arranged with authorities concerned.
"H" Class arrives Falmouth from patrol to Clyde when ready.
JUNON to Plymouth for repairs.
H.50 and O 9 on completion of repairs to Clyde (B) S/Ms may be placed at extended notice on arrival as follows. S/Ms which have carried out both patrols for 14 days. S/Ms which have carried out one patrol only seven days. (F.O.S. 1314A/31).

ASPRODEL. My 1817A/30. Ship not fitted with S A gear speed between 17 and 21 A buoy ten knots. (F.O. Humber 1505A/31).

/SEALION ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. - contd.

SEALION. Your 1029A/30. Will be 24 hours late.
(SEALION 1649A/31).

KIWI. See Shipping.

Operations.

Denmark Strait Patrol. Encountered forming ice in 066° 33' N. 025° 16' W. apparently trending 120°. Have altered patrol to (A) 066° 20', 025° 23' (B) 250° (C) ABELIA 160° 5 miles till daylight.
(ANEMONE 0830N/31 to BERWICK).
Your 1135A/24. VERONICA expects to arrive Moville 1200A/3 to collect stores before sailing for destination. (RENOWN 1140N/31 to C. in C. W.A.)
ABELIA's R.D.F. broken down. Contacted ice at 1030 in 066° 20' N. 027° W, course 065°.
(ANEMONE 1330N/31 to BERWICK).

Q N. Prepare to carry out operation Q N.
(C. in C. Nore 1010A/31 to BEEHIVE).
My 1010A/31. Carry out operation Q N tonight as amended by my 1040A/20/12. Suspected northbound convoy 5 miles west of Yjmuiden at 1440/31.
(C. in C. Nore 1526A/31 to F.O.Yarmouth, BEEHIVE).

Patrol off Flushing. Weather permitting available M.T.B's of 1st Flotilla are to carry out a patrol tonight between Ostend and Schouwen.
If conditions permit Flushing Roads should be searched. Surface vessels met east of 2° 40' E. may be attacked without challenge.
(C. in C. Nore 1220A/31 to BEEHIVE).

Vest Fiord. Proposed S/M Patrol. It is probable that enemy shipping does not use the inner leads between Bodo and Tranoy during darkness. Suggest that one of the subs. on patrol proceed into Vest Fiord for a few days before withdrawing. Admiralty pass to F.O.S.
(S.O. Force J. 1700A/31 to C. in C. H.F.)

Exercise. (KENT). R/V with RESOLUTION at 1400 in 180° Beer Beer 4 for A L T attacks. F.O.C. 10th C.S. will inform you if it is possible to arrange R.A.F. exercises for you with NIGERIA or TRINIDAD between A.A. firing and A L T attack.
(C. in C. H.F. 2358A/31 to KENT).

/Proposed ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations. - contd.

Proposed Signal Exercise. Your 0950/20. Approved, providing the ships are not otherwise employed. (C.C.O., 2359A/31 to S.O.A.S.C. Largs).

British Air Activity.

S.B.R. My 1632A/25. Cancel para. (c). (F.O.S. 1206A/31 to H.Q.C.C.)

Brest bombed. On day 29/12, Night 29/30, Night 30/31, and day 31/12 no operations took place. On day 30/12, sixteen Halifaxes, supported by 9 squadrons of fighter aircraft, were detailed to attack the battle cruisers at Brest. Weather fair and visibility good. 11 Halifaxes dropped their bombs. No results observed owing to evasive action having to be taken. Our A/C encountered intense heavy and light flak which was extremely accurate - all the Halifaxes were damaged, some extensively. (H.Q.B.C. 1345/31).

Mining.

Operation Q O. Cancel operation Q O today Wednesday. Eleven Group fogbound. (C. in C. Nore 0719A/31 to M/S.9).

Clyde M/S. Force. See Policy.

Yarmouth. Trawler detonated Accoustic Mine 1335A today 355° 1½ miles No.6 Buoy. (F.O.I.C.Gt.Yarmouth 1515A/31).

Thames Estuary. One Magnetic Mine detonated as follows at 1937/30 by Sweepers. (Capt. M/S Sheerness 1810/31).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.

Brest.

Brest 1416/31. Preliminary interpretation of photographs shows all three Major Units in same positions as on 30/12. (D.D.I.C. 1823A/31).

TIRPITZ.

Following sentences incorporated to today's daily summary of information passed from G.H.Q. Washington to General Commanding U.S. Force in Iceland read - "VON TIRPITZ last reported at Trondhjem, now believed in Atlantic". Can this be confirmed. (A.C.I.C. 1845N/31 to Admty.)
Your 1845N/31. Following is repetition of Admiralty 1130A/31 to B.A.D.Washington.
Your 1510R/30. There is good reason to believe TIRPITZ is still in the Baltic.
(N.I.D.1. 2249A/31 to A.C.I.C.)

Navigational.

Yarmouth.

Port closed owing to fog.
(F.O.I.C.Gt. Yarmouth, 0706A/31).
Port now open owing to improved visibility.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0917A/31).

Denmark Strait.

Ice. See Operations.

Harwich.

Port now open (F.O.I.C.Harwich 0912A/31).

Q.Z.H. 122.

Request Q.Z.H. 122 may be cancelled. This area is considered clear. (C. in C. Nore 1121A/31).

Cape Orlov Light. (PQ.7)

Characteristic changed to flash white for 5 seconds every 2 minutes, are 000° to 160°, visibility 23 miles. You are requested to instruct escorts to inform Ships of PQ 7.
(2) Russian Authorities state change will endure for about 2 months.
(D.T.D. 1146A/31 to C. in C. H.F.)

South Shear Buoy.

Light on South Shear Buoy, vicinity Tuskar, extinguished. (F.O.I.C.Milford Haven, 1317A/31).

No.8 Medway Buoy.

No.8 Medway Buoy dragged to approx. 51° 27' 47" N. 00° 46' 52" E. (C. in C. Nore, 1847A/31).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Technical.

Oiling at Sea. My 1928/24 re R.F.A. EAGLESDALE. Request necessary arrangements be made for oiling at sea trials with rubber hose.
(D. of Stores, 1134A/31 to C. in C. W.A.)

Casualties & Defects.

NELLIE (Mined 21/12). Request 3 tugs may be sent to endeavour re-float NELLIE at 1500/1. If re-floated vessel should proceed if possible to King George Dock, Hull.
(Chief Salvage Officer, Hull, 1051/31).

JUNON. Arrangements can be made to dock JUNON at Devonport for repair of propellers. Date of arrival at Devonport to be reported in due course.
(D.O.D. H. 1053A/31 to F.O.S.)

Shipping & Convoys.

Convoy PQ.7B. Composition, Escorts, Route. Details.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland 1049N/31). See Lion Copy.

E.N.27. Amend my 1709/22. E.N.27 postponed 24 hours to 2100/2. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1211/31).

BATORY. F.O.C.N.A. 2142A/30. Route from
(c) 045° N. 019° W. (d) 180° Fastnet Rock. 10 miles.
Thence Q.Z.F.18 and route A and B of W.A.C.I. part 131 omit positions L J and I.
VANOC proceed Liverpool on passing Skerries.
BADSWORTH escort BATORY to Clyde thence proceed Londonderry. (C. in C. W.A., 1502A/31).

QP.4.
AMBROSE ROYAL.
EULIMA. I estimate AMBROSE ROYAL and EULIMA now have only 9 days diesel oil remaining. If this is correct they will require to bunker in Kola Inlet before proceeding Iceland. Request S.O. of escort may ascertain position on making contact and report to you for orders. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 1533C/31 to S.B.N.O. North Russia, EDINBURGH).

/Routeing ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. - contd.

Routeing of PQ and QP Convoys.

Your 1926A/30. Concur policy of sailing the convoys direct from Loch Ewe but, in view of navigation difficulties involved in approaches of Seidisfiord from (? Archangel). (See A.M.1559A/3/10 my number 1464/HF.1060/9 dated 15 Oct. 1941 and A.L. M/PD.0278/41 dated 11 Nov. 1941), I do not consider the route west of Faroes is acceptable. Consider route should pass east of Faroes and thence through approx. 066° N. 010° W.
(ii) In this event, additional AA protection should be provided during early part of the journey and it will rarely be possible to provide this from Home Fleet. Fighter escort for as far to northerward as practicable will also be necessary during daylight hours.
(iii) It will be necessary to review situation when risk of air attack becomes greater with longer periods of daylight.
(iv) Concur suggestion in para. 4.
(C. in C. H.F. 1752A/31 to Admty.)

F.N.92.
F.N.93.

If you have lost contact anchor rear part of Convoy and endeavour to join up with F.N.93. Keep SAPPHIRE with you. WIDGEON remaining with F.N.92. (LOWESTOFT 2153A/31 to WOOLSTON).
Your 2153A/31. Lost touch with Convoy and escort. Visibility nil, position uncertain. Intend remaining in vicinity to collect stragglers when visibility improves.
(WOOLSTON 2315A/31 to LOWESTOFT).
Rear of F.N.93 anchored in vicinity 54 F Buoy thick fog. JAN VAN BRAKEL, PUFFIN, BASSET in company. JAN VAN BRAKEL is not aware rear has lost contact with van. (PUFFIN 2345A/31 to LIDDESDALE).

P.Q.7.
P.Q.7B.

Inform ships of P.Q.7 and P.Q.7B. Characteristic of Cape Orlov Light changed to flashing white for 5 seconds every 2 minutes Arc 000° to 160°. Visibility 23 miles. (C. in C. H.F. 2212A/31 to CUMBERLAND, SALAMANDER, TARTAR).

O.N.52.
KIWI.

Sailed KIWI for St. John's Newfoundland with O.N.52 in accordance with my 1114A/27. F.O.C. N.F. is requested to take necessary action in accordance with B.A.D. Washington's 1659R/7/11.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock 2344A/31).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Raiders.

Intelligence

A.M. 1801A/23.
(1) On 23/12 outward bound tanker, probably ex Norwegian OLE JACOB, bombed in 45° 16' N. 12° 17' W. torpedoed by A/C on 24/12 in 43° 44' N. 7° 52' W. last seen beached with after well deck submerged.
(2) By D/F at 2036/29/12 German Unit probably M/V in 25° to 30° S. 25° to 35° W. possibly homeward bound from Japan. FRANFURT is reported to have remained four weeks in same area in July 1941, waiting orders to proceed.
(3) VINCENT, see A.M. 1650A/16, is overdue at Balbao since 23/12.
(4) Confidential Chilean Naval Sources report two unidentified warships off Easter Island steering west on 28/12.
(5) U.S. Aircraft fired on by unidentified ship apparently shadowing U.S. Tanker RAMAPO about 500 miles 245° San Diego P.M. 28/12 bombed without result.
(D.D.I.C. 1610A/31 to C's in C. etc.).

North Atlantic.

SCOTTISH a/c attack.

Am being attacked by enemy aircraft bearing 313° from Porthcawl 19 miles at 8 O'clock. 2 F.W's bearing unknown height unknown. Course 360°.
(SCOTTISH 0930/31 0935/31 to Gib. W/T).
W.D. Note. Porthcawl is evidently incorrect. Position is probably off Tagus.
My 0930 and 0935/31. One F.W. aircraft approached from Southward but was driven off without pressing home attack. B.3 hit. Second F.W. aircraft followed 5 minutes later but did not attack. (SCOTTISH 1000A/31 to F.O.C.N.A.).
One airplane unknown height unknown, course 360° my position 310° from Porthcawl distance 39 miles.
(SCOTTISH 1130/31 to Gib. W/T) (See note to former re Porthcawl).

U/B.

A U/B is operating in the vicinity of Azores and may be aware of MIRROR's activities.
(D.D.I.C. 1015A/31 to F.O.C.N.A. (R) COLTSFOOT).

P.39

Intend to sail P.39 p.m./2nd for A/S patrol in vicinity. Alboran Island.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1336A/31 to C.in C. Med.).

/CAMPBELTOWN....

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 31.12.1941. Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. -Contd

CAMPBELTOWN — In view of WESTCOTT defects request you will retain CAMPBELTOWN for the present. Further signals will be made when she can no longer be spared. (C.in C. W.A. 1050A/31 to F.O.C.N.A.).

Gibraltar — Gibraltar W/T Stn. will be out of action on 441.8 k/cs/Sec. from 0700 to 1500 G.M.T. 1/1. Other services will be maintained on reduced power. (F.O.C.N.A. 1611A/31 to N.A.S.).

Vesca system, extension. — Your 1810A/25 (1710/25 intended) Promulgation on lines set out is satisfactory so far as N.A. Station is concerned. From security point of view, essential that local discretion should be exercised in promulgating shipping dates of arrival and departure. This is necessary as majority of ships arrive and leave Gibraltar in convoy.(F.O.C.N.A. 1620A/31 to Admty.).

P.39. — Intend to sail P.39 p.m./2nd for A/S patrol in vicinity of Alboran Island. (F.O.C.N.A. 1336A/31, to C.in C. Med.).

LIPARI (German). — Malaga reports LIPARI sailed 29/12. Destination unknown. (S.O.I.Gibraltar 1700A/31 to Admty.). This is the first movement of this ship since she originally arrived on 5/9/1939. (D.S. 848).

H.G.77. — Departures BLACK SWAN FOWEY BLUEBELL HELIOTROPE CAMPION STONECROP with Convoy H.G.77. Local escort WISHART VIDETTE. (F.O.C.N.A. 1946A/31 to Admty. C.in C. W.A.).

EXMOOR CROOME airmen from CONGO. — My P.C. and S. 027° 02' N. 014° 26' W. 036° 20. CROOME has four survivors from Hudson aircraft recovered from Portuguese ship CONGO. Have one serious hospital case. E.T.A. 0900A/2. (EXMOOR 2001A/31 to F.O.C.N.A.).

Following from B.N.A. Lisbon (Begins). Portuguese Naval Authorities inform that on 28th Portuguese steamer CONGO picked up pilot and all crew of British aircraft in 035° 10' N. 011° 55' W. CONGO bound Sao Thome. Authorities will furnish P.C. and S. to enable H.M. Ship to take off airmen thus avoiding internment. (Ends). (F.O.C.N.A. 2305A/31 to C.in C. S.A.). Recovered by CROOME see 0801A/1.

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

DUNNOTTAR CASTLE.

My 1541/6. Date of completion of DUNNOTTAR CASTLE is now 10/1 ex trials. Extension of time caused by necessity for manufacture of new exhaust piston.
(C.S. Simonstown 0741Z/31 to Admty.).

INDOMITABLE exercises.

While in West Indies fighter aircraft were exercised daily in interception being controlled by R.D.F. and R/T. Owing to necessity for R/T silence no further practices appear possible. Most desirable for occasional exercises to be carried out. Request if type 57 may be used in South African waters.
(INDOMITABLE 1037Z/31 to Admty.) Reply C.in C. S.A. 1936Z/1.
Your 1455Z/30. INDOMITABLE must not be delayed to await ENGADINE's cargo.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1135A/31 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown).

ASTURIAS

My 1630Z/30 and C.in C. S.A. 1331Z/30. ASTURIAS is to proceed forthwith to Falkland Is. for fuel, reporting E.T.A.
(R.A.S.A.D. 1046Z/31 to ASTURIAS).

Minesweepers.

Your 0017N/4/12. Anticipate five Oropesa 'LL' and S.A. Minesweepers will be joining your station about May 1942.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1051A/31 to C.in C. S.A.).

Removal of Vichy French

My 1654/12. (Re efforts to induce Union Govt. to remove Vichy French from Cyattal areas). Can a reply now be given?.
(S.O.I. Capetown 1104B/31 to Admty.).

DORSETSHIRE
ASTURIAS
BIRMINGHAM
BULOLO.

Your 0731Z/27 (1731/27 intended).
Para. 2 (?Concur)
Para.3. DORSETSHIRE is on detached duties in Indian Ocean. I cannot send you an 8 inch cruiser. DORSETSHIRE will have to have a short spell for making good defects when she returns to Cape area. After that, if U.S.A. should have taken over strategic control of your area and situation elsewhere permits, I will send (groups missing) DORSETSHIRE.
Para.4. Concur.
Para.5. Concur that ASTURIAS should proceed Falkland Isles now and BIRMINGHAM after your Rio visit (vide my 1401Z/27) but consider BULOLO should remain on trade route for time being.
(2) I am considering possibility of sending another A.M.C. to strengthen your squadron temporarily but cannot do so at once.
(C.in C. S.A. 1331Z/31 to R.A.S.A.D.).

/DEVONSHIRE...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. -Contd.

DEVONSHIRE CANTON Pernambuco.

Your 1301/30 (1303/30). Requirements for DEVONSHIRE, CANTON arranged.
(N.A. Rio de Janeiro, 1402Z/31 to C.in C. S.A.).
Your 1301/30 and R.A.S.A.D's 1119/29. Visit of DEVONSHIRE, CANTON, to Pernambuco and Oiler ARNDALE to Rio de Janeiro approved.
(N.A. Rio De Janeiro 2036Z/31 to C.in C. S.A.).

B.D.V's

Sailed BARSTOKE, BARBOUR, BARONIA, S.of A. 6½ knots E.T.A. Kilindini 12/1. Routed as in my 1400Z/19/5.
(N.O.I.C. Durban 1547Z/31 to C.in C.S.A. C.in C. E.F. S.N.O.R.S. etc.).

RESOLUTION.

Your 1423A/29. Most important you should carry as many mails as possible. Request space which can be allocated to confidential bags and mails for the Cape.
(D.O.D.(H) 1558A/31 to RESOLUTION).

South American Countries policy.

During past 10 days have discussed war situation as affecting South American countries with H.M. representatives, S.N.O. including U.S. as well as Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay and Brazil.
Point always made that chance of attack by Axis powers is unlikely to be diminished by adoption on part of these countries of an accommodation attitude to Axis powers, and that signs of preparation to defend themselves and their trade by maintaining patrols on trade routes might well act as deterrent. Fleets of Brazil, Argentine, and Chile are by no means of negligible value and activity by these forces cannot but help common object.
Tendency in these countries to discount the value of their own forces, and I have stressed how much they can help. Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay and Brazil appreciate this. Whilst Uruguay has no forces whatsoever Brazilian Navy already commenced a small patrol in North and Dr. Aranha has almost convinced me that after conclusion of conferences more extensive patrols will be instituted.
Attitude of Argentina remains the difficulty but I am satisfied that Argentine Navy will not be averse to playing its part if Govt. permits.
Both Dr. Guani and Dr. Aranha told me that they have every hope that Argentine can be brought to their point of view.
Unfortunate if Uruguayan ports were available to our ships without co-operation of Argentina in defence of Plate and its trade outer, and I feel from a Naval point of view, it might be wise to try and influence Rio de Janeiro conference along following lines.

/(1).....

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

South America Countries policy. -Contd.

(1) Persuade S.A. countries that too accommodating an attitude towards Axis powers will not deter the latter from aggression.
(11) Whatever diplomatic relations resulting from conference may be the presence of South American Naval forces on trade route is highly desirable.
H.M. Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro agrees.
(R.A.S.A.D. 1730Z/31 to Admty.).

U/B

Boeing Fortress Bomber on passage (?Natal) to Freetown reports sighting S/M on surface in 0605 N.15.03 W. at 1030/31. Submarine dived on sighting aircraft.
(C.in C. S.A. 1825Z/31 to Admty.).

W.S. 14 D.

Admty. 1834/13, para 13. All ships of W.S.14 D. should now proceed to Durban. Personnel required to be transhipped so as to be able to accompany W.S. 14 D to Malaya , (details).
(D.S.T. 2016A/31 to P.S.T.O. Simonstown) See Lion Copy.
Request you will order ships of W.S. 14 D. to Durban in accordance with D. of S.T.'s. 2016A/31 para. 1 to P.S.T.O. Simonstown.
(D.O.D.(F) 2017A/31 to C.in C. S.A.).

EXMOOR CROOME

Your 1446A/31. (Requesting route for EXMOOR & CROOME). Ships routed (?direct from) (?East) of Canary Islands approx. T.of A. (?10)00Z/1.
(N.O.I.C. Bathurst 2035N/31 to F.O.C.N.A.).

U.S. Movements.

Pernambuco arrival 31st U.S. Cruiser OMAHA U.S. Destroyer SOMERS arrival 30th Brazilian minelayer CAMOCIN.
(S.O.I. Montevideo 2040Z/31 to S.A. Div.).

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

U/B. German S/M. suspected near harbour entrance. (R.A. Alexandria, 0020B/31 to Force I., Med.Fleet).

A/S patrol for "Motor." My 1835/30. Para. 1 second sentence. Sunderland will not contact before 0900/31 owing to weather conditions. (C. in C. Med., 0516B/31, to C.S.7.)

U/B. Periscope sighted in ?Great Pass at ?1910. Investigate. (201 Group 0926/31 to F.B.N.9029).

F.A.A. Sqdns. There are now 8 Albacores of 828 Sqn. and 7 Swordfish of 830 Sqn. Suggested the 2 Squadrons should be amalgamated and run as 2 separate flights retaining present personnel. Advantages.
If approved it is propsed squadron should be called the Malta Naval Air Squadron and Lt. Cdr. Hopkins should remain in command.
(V.A.Malta., 1010B/31, to C. in C. Med.)

Sinkings. Following ships have been sunk at sea by enemy action. SHUNTIEN on 23/12. WARSZAWA, Polish, on 26/12, VOLO on 28/12.
(N.C.S.O. Alexandria 1148B/31 to Admty.)

TRUANT, TRUSTY, for Far East. My 1131B/25. Both submarines are painted dark blue and have no pendant number painted on conning towers. (Capt. S.1, 1215B/31, to C. in C. E.I.)

Libya, 30/12. Small ships previously off Ras Aali now moved to presumed inloading point 10 miles west possibly owing to Albacore attacks previous night. Throughout day 4 Blenheims Sqdn. including Free French heavily bombed enemy positions inside Bardia perimeter obtaining many direct hits and near misses. Boat in Bardia harbour later sunk by gunfire. (H.Q., R.A.F., M.E., 1219/31).

Sinking of U/B's 11/12, 23/12, 28/12. Italian U-Boat CARACCIOLO sunk by FARNDALE 11/12 carried 7000 tins petrol 20 litres capacity to Bardia, was returning to Suda Bay to take on further fuel supplies. U-Boat left Bardia with captured British documents and about 20 passengers. Documents sunk with boat. Italian Gen. Lami of Engineer Corps? and C.O. U-Boat, Lieut. Comm. Musotto both missing. Full report on CARACCIOLO sent by air. Ref. C. in C. Med. 1624/23, (N.T. in W.D. but see 1255/6/1) name of U-Boat not yet ascertained. C.O. Kaufmann taken prisoner. Ref. C. in C. Med. 1202/28, name of U-Boat U.75 C.O. Regelman missing. Thiesenhausen believed Commander of German U-Boats in Eastern Med. (S.O.I. Med., 1222B/31, to Admty. C. in C. Med.)

/Zuara ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Zuara, mining. R.A.F. H.Q., Med. I.310 dated 30th (?.) Position of mines laid (?Z)uara by Albacores. Bearing and distance (? in) (? cables) from end of North Mole (corrupt Gp.) 1¼ 210° ¾ 090°.
(V.A. Malta, 1433B/31 to C. in C. Med.)

Japanese Policy. (1) A.1 Source reports following conversation with Arzur French N.A., Istanbul, who is in constant active collaboration with German and Japanese attaches.
(2) Japanese Military Attache who came here direct from operations staff Tokyo told Arzur (a) Japanese consider it now impossible for British to reinforce Singapore with aircraft from India because north south communications cut (b) reinforcements from aircraft carriers impossible in view of great Japanese strength torpedo carrying aircraft (c) Torpedo carrying aircraft manned by fanatics who expect to suffer 50% casualties on any major enterprise (d) Singapore should fall about Mid-March (e) attack on Dutch East India will follow (f) then attack on Australia which should fall end of 1942 (g) Though Japanese knew America unprepared actual degree unpreparedness amazed them (h) Japanese have so far engaged pick of air force but only older naval units. (M.A., Ankara, 1445/31 to W.O.)

UTMOST. Intend sailing UTMOST for Gibraltar and U.K. p.m. on 2/1, diving during daylight throughout passage to Gibraltar. UTMOST will have only 2 mark 2 torpedoes on board.
(Capt. S. 10, 1510B/31 to Admty.)

ABDIEL. C. in C. Med. 1850B/30. E.T.A. Port Said 0630B/1st. (ABDIEL, 1641C/31).

French & German Shipping. Departure 30th. ST. BRIEC Sete.
Arrival 31st. DERNA COETLOGON. (Barcelona, 1703/31).

German Shipping. Arrivals. 30, LORENZ L.M. RUSS, 31, LISBOA.
Departures 30, HAN SCHMIDT, OTTO LEONHARDT, both for Cartagena, OTTO LEONHARDT, about 10,000 tons Cyanacide. (Valencia, 1723/31).

Malta Air Report. CSR Malta to 1600 hours 31/12/41.
30th, damage not yet reported, air raid 1148 hours, nil. 1440 hours, 3 JU. 88 20 ME.109 crossed coast, bombs dockyard, 1 civilian killed, 9 injured.
Night 30/31, 1622 to 0400 hours, 23 raiders crossed coast, bombs land and sea, 17 houses demolished, 27 damaged. Kalafrana 1 airman killed 3 wounded, mobile oxygen plant destroyed, slight damage power cables and diesel fuelling system. Halfar slight

/damage ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Malta Air Report. (contd.) damage. 4 alerts 0645, 6 raiders crossed coast great height, 0804 hours 6 ME.109 circled Island, 1044 hours 46 raiders ME.109 and bombers. Takali bombed, 3 airmen slightly injured (HM) Abingdon machine and destroyed 1 ME.109, 3 naval crew wounded. 1310 hours 1 raider approached did not cross coast. (H.Q., Malta, 1805/31).

Precautions against Human Torpedoes. My 0930B/20. Amend last sentence of para 1. (2) Para. 3. Stock available will allow following issues to be made from Alexandria. (3) Further supplies are not expected before March and economy of charges is therefore essential. (C. in C. Med., 1855B/31 to N.O.i/c Malta N.O.i/c Alexandria, A.S.Alexandria, S.B.N.O.Suez. (R) F.O.C. Red Sea Force, Admty. N.O.i/c's Port Said, Syrian Ports, Famagusta (Cyprus), Haifa, B.S.N.O.Tobruk, N.O.i/c's Tripoli (Syria), Derna, Benghazi, Mersa Matruh.)

Navigation. Following has been read. Tug sank position 031° 16' 029° 14', one lighter adrift dangerous to navigation. Direction of drift S.E. between 1 knot and 2 knots. (PEONY, 1950B/31).

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Malta Air Report. (contd.) damage. 4 alerts 0645, 6 raiders crossed coast great height, 0804 hours 6 ME.109 circled Island, 1044 hours 46 raiders ME.109 and bombers. Takali bombed, 3 airmen slightly injured (HM) Abingdon machine and destroyed 1 ME.109, 3 naval crew wounded. 1310 hours 1 raider approached did not cross coast. (H.Q., Malta, 1805/31).

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War Diary. 31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Burma. 30/12, Situation report. Japanese evacuated Bokypin night of 28/29, occupied by us this morning. Air R/C today 3000 feet saw 3 aeroplanes believed fighters on Raheng aerodrome. Considerable influx of labour into Rangoon, dock workmen about 50% back, trains also working in docks.
(G.O.C. Burma, 0055/31 to W.O.)

Convoy B.A.12. 0130Z/31. ASCANIUS, CITY OF PARIS, YOMA, Troops and Stores, Aden.
(N.C.S.O. Bombay 0139Z/31 to Admty.)

DORSETSHIRE MAURITIUS W.S.12 X. C. in C. E.I. 1410Z/28.
2. DORSETSHIRE is to remain on E.I. Station until further orders.
3. Future of convoy W.S.12 X is at present uncertain, but will be communicated as soon as known. 4. Arrangements should be made to complete work on MAURITIUS fire main at Simonstown.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1017A/31 to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I., C. in C. S.A.)

CAPETOWN CASTLE. Your 0346/29 and 1041/18. CAPETOWN CASTLE not now required to proceed to Karachi. Ship should be ready to sail to New Zealand a.m. about 11/1. Can ship embark approx. 120 R.I. Navy Ratings to be disembarked Sydney en route?
(S.S.T.O. India, 1131Z/31 to D. of S.T.)

Ammunition Ships. 1. Request 4 ships may be taken up immediately for service as A.S.I.S. to accommodate ammunition now on passage from U.K. A.M.0019/25 refers.
(C. in C. E.I. 1140Z/31 to P.S.T.O. India.)

TEVIOT BANK. Your 0313/22. Although not entirely suitable, I would like to employ TEVIOT BANK at Horsborough Atoll (?using) KUNG WO where a less effective lay will require to be accepted. Request she will be sailed for Trincomalee as convenient.
(C. in C. E.I. 1248Z/31 to C. in C. E.F.)

Port Blair defences. 1. Armindia inform me they are sending a force of 1,000 troops and 2 18 pounder guns for defence Port Blair, due to leave Madras on 2/1. They ask whether 2 of 4-inch guns earmarked for Nancowry could be used for same purpose.
2. I am reluctant to agree observing this will leave only 2 4-inch guns available in Colombo for any future M.N.B.D.O. operation, but I have informed Armindia that I have referred matter to you for a final decision.

/3 ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Port Blair defences - contd.

3. I am discussing with Armindia possibility of laying minefields to assist in defence of Port Blair and our recommendation will be signalled to C. in C. E.F.
(C. in C. E.I., 1344Z/31 to Admty.)

Ceylon Base Staff.

Responsibility for bases in Ceylon on scale outlined in Admty. 1850/29 necessitates considerable grading up of Naval and Admty. civil staff in the Island. (II) I strongly urge (a) flag officer be appointed as R.A. Ceylon. Present appointment as Capt. i/c, Ceylon, to lapse. (b) Capt. Merriman now on passage to relieve present Capt. i/c be re-appointed as Capt.-Superintendent i/c Naval Establishment in Ceylon. (III) Appointment of Capt. Wood as N.O.i/c Trincomalee would not be affected. (IV) Propose R.A. Ceylon be flown to Ceylon and that he should on arrival make his own recommendations as to additional naval and civil staff required.
(C. in C. E.I. 1528Z/31 to Admty.)

Ceylon. Control of Aircraft.

Part 1. Chiefs of Staff in their 58805 cypher M.O.12 18/12 confirmed that India should assume general control of Air Forces in Ceylon. C. in C. East Indies has suggested that, as primary role of Air Forces in Ceylon will be co-operation with Navy, operational control should be vested in him. General control of Air Forces in Ceylon must be vested in you and another independent Command cannot be established. In order to clear the relative position between O.C. R.A.F. Ceylon and C. in C. East Indies, a directif as in parts 2 and 3 should be issued by you. This directif has been agreed by Admty. Note that control of Air Forces operating in defence of Ceylon as distinct from G.R. aircraft, remain your responsibility under G.O.C. in C.
Part 2. O.C. Air Forces in Ceylon to be responsible to A.O.C. in C. India, for operational control, administration, training and efficiency of Air Forces in Ceylon. O.C. Air Forces in Ceylon is to accept general directif from C. in C. East Indies, for operation of G.R. aircraft, but is responsible for execution of directif. Primary roles of Air Forces in Ceylon are co-operation with naval and military forces in that area, maintenance of sea communications and air defence of Ceylon.
Part 3. Naval aircraft, either shore based or temporarily disembarked from carriers, will be under the direct control of C. in C. East Indies. At his discretion, naval fighter aircraft may be employed in the defence of Ceylon, in which case they will be placed under the operational control of the O.C. R.A.F. Ceylon.
Part 4. Request copy may be passed to C. in C. East Indies.
(Air Ministry 1755 G.M.T./31 to A.H.Q.India.)

/A/A Units ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies - contd.

A/A Units W.S.14.

Personal C.I.G.S. from Gen. Wavell. Your 60754 (M.O.1) dated 25/12. Am averse to withdrawing A.A. units from Iraq if avoidable. Understand some portion of W.S.14 is being transhipped at Durban. Request your decision regarding A.A. in W.S.14 is reconsidered with view to both light and heavy regiments being sent direct to India.
(C. in C. India, 1930/31 to W.O.)

Base Craft.

Ten motor fishing vessels with diesel engines are being shipped Trincomalee for use as harbour service craft at Trincomalee and Fleet Base Addu Atoll. Report if these vessels can be manned from local sources. Crew 1 coxswain, 1 engineman, 4 deckhands.
(D.S.V.P. 2131A/31 to C. in C. E.I.)

China.

Removal of Petrol from Malaya.

Ref. 0103/24 from Admty. Can take 4 tankers named, to Pladjoe initially, to lift 43,000 tons. Please sail independently.
(C. in C. E.F., 0345Z/31 to A.C.N.B.)
Your 0103/24 and my 0345Z/31 to A.C.N.B., N.O. Melbourne. Further tanker tonnage required to lift (A) 29,000 tons aviation spirit for Middle East (B) Surplus production of Pladjoe of 40,000 tons motor spirit, which otherwise will clog storage. Destination (3)as you require. Tanker for (A) and (B) to Pladjoe in 1st instance. Please advise Asiatic Petroleum Co. London.
(C. in C. E.F. 0347Z/31 to Admty.)
Your 0103/24. Not now anticipated possible (A) to lift regular cargoes at Pangkalan Brandan, as air attack on ports and refinery must be expected very shortly, or (B) to receive regular (corrupt group) oil cargo at Singapore. Singapore's surplus, after allowing retention of 6 months service and civil requirements plus 50% to meet loss by enemy action etc., will be lifted as your signal quotes. It is intended all tankers proceed to Pladjoe in first instance, to use to maximum, bar permitting, thence to Singapore to complete full cargo, and sail destinations required. Sailings will be arranged so that tankers arriving Singapore P.M. top dash up during the night, and leave dawn next day.
(C. in C. E.F., 0349Z/31 to Admty.(R) F.O.Malaya, A.C.N.B.)

/Demolitions ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 31.12.1941. Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - contd.

Demolitions Stonecutters and Kuching D/F Stations demolished. Penang demolished but part of equipment evacuated with crew to Singapore. S.Ps and C.Bs were destroyed in each case.
(C.S. Singapore 0421Z/31 to Admty.)

ABDIEL. Admty. 2250/29. Request ABDIEL may be sailed for Colombo where she will receive further orders.
(C. in C. E.F. 0840Z/31 to C. in C. Med.)

Shipping Tonnage, position. Your 0009/30 to S.O.(I) Singapore. Approx. estimate of position is to date 25/12 (a) tonnage presumed lost. 78,276 (47 vessels). (b) tonnage previously on China coast and now known to be definitely safe: 94,802 (31 vessels). (c) tonnage between Shanghai Hong Kong and south, or at Manila, of which part is still uncertain: 53,711 (20 vessels). Further details will be signalled by S.O.(I) Singapore as available. Foregoing include Norwegian and Panamanian, but not Russian or Swedish vessels. N.O.I.C. Hong Kong reported that all ships unable to leave Hong Kong district amounting to about 43,000 tons had been scuttled. There is every reason to believe that some at least of ships under (c) have arrived safely in British or Allied ports.
(C. in C. E.F., 0923Z/31 to Admty.)

Movements. Victoria departure 29/12 DRAGON, DURBAN, VAMPIRE
Singapore departure 30/12 KELANTAN, 31/12 TENEDES, ELECTRA, EXPRESS, STRONGHOLD, THANET.
(S.O.I. Singapore, 1031Z/31 to Admty.)

Japan. Intelligence re Policy.
(N.A. Ankara 1445/31) See Mediterranean.

Situation Report. Oprep/17. H.M.S. KUDAT sunk by dive bombers 30/12 at Port Swettenham. Kuala Lumpur bombed and machine gunned by 4 enemy aircraft no details. Kuala Lipis attacked by unspecified number of E/A. No casualties reported. 3 out of 4 Catalinas ex U.K. arrived. Fourth remaining Ceylon
(A.H.Q. F.E. 2358/31.)

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Dispositions. Estimated positions of H.M. and Allied Ships at 1800 G.M.T./31.

Ship	Position	Course	Speed
MARSDALE	39°N. 43°W.	Patrol	-
MARON	38°N. 43°W.	"	-
ALBATROSS	10°N. 45½°W.	273°	10
DEVONSHIRE			
CANTON			
CILICIA	07½°N. 35°W.	Patrol	-
ASTURIAS	18°S. 35°W.	"	-
Convoy C.T.8.			
ROCKINGHAM	45½°N. 60°W.	242°	12
F.F.S LE TRIOMPHANT	13°S. 148°E.	326	14
H.M. EMPRESS OF CANADA.	47°S. 156°W.	090°	17½

(D.O.D.(F) 0952Z/31 to Opnav.)

Programme for MOA My 1232Q/26/11. Request you will arrange details of onward passage of MOA from San Diego via Honolulu consulting U.S. Authorities as necessary. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1042Q/31 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa (R) N.Z.N.B. B.A.D.)

Vesca System, Extension. Your 1710/25. Request confirmation that intention is to limit this to inter-station movements. If, as seems to be foreshadowed in Part 2, it is to be extended so as to eliminate private cables regarding all merchant shipping, including movements within station limits, this will necessitate addition to staffs. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1129Q/31 to Admty.)

ALBATROSS. In view of B.A.R.M's 1528A/30, my 2213Q/20 is cancelled. ALBATROSS is to leave Trinidad after disembarking one Walrus in accordance with my 1012Q/30 and proceed to Mobile calling at Kingston Jamaica to disembark remaining aircraft to R.N.A. Stn., Palisadoes. Maintenance personnel is to be landed with aircraft. Report in due course E.T.A. at Kingston Jamaica and anticipated date of arrival Mobile. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1132Q/31 to ALBATROSS.)

Washington Report. Washops 21. (i) Philippine Is. 29/12. Gen. MacArthur reports Fort Mills heavily bombed by 60 enemy A/C; 4 were destroyed by A.A. fire. Shortly after raid a submarine contact was made in controlled minefield, 2 mines were fired and a large oil slick was observed. 31/12. General MacArthur reports heavy enemy pressure; enemy armed forces infiltrating and all roads controlled by enemy dive bombers. Manila will be uncovered by nightfall 31/12. Next U.S. position will be Abataan.

/(ii) ...

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Washington Report contd.

(ii) Hawaii. A report up to midnight 29/30 states no enemy activity with exception of believed presence of enemy submarine off North Oahu; submarine W/T has been frequently heard.
(iii) U.S. Pacific Coast. 30/12. A U.S. army aircraft reports sighting a submarine off Cape Disappointment (Columbia River)
(J.S.M. Washington 1259R/31 to Admty.)

RAMAPO, suspicious vessel.

My 1537R/30. From description given by Ship's Officers of U.S. Oiler RAMAPO and by pilot of one of aircraft it is believed suspected vessel was KUNIKAWA MARU or that class.
(B.A.D. 1341R/31 to Admty.)

ROXBOROUGH.

My 2033Z/30. ROXBOROUGH has now developed serious defects which must be taken in hand before sailing. Anticipate completion 7/1 and arrival Charleston 1200 zone 5 time on 12/1.
(F.O.N.F. 1405Z/31 to B.A.R.M.)

T.C.16 GEORGE WASHINGTON.

My 0349/13/11. It is now anticipated GEORGE WASHINGTON completes conversation Philadelphia early Jan. proceeding New York mid January and ready to sail from New York about 30/1.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1427Z/31 to D. of S.T.)

BELLE ISLE (French)

Censorship intercept indicates French ship BELLE ISLE was scheduled to leave Casablanca 12/12, and that she will be due at Marseilles about 12/2.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1429Q/31 to Admty., F.O.C.N.A., C. in C. Med.)

BEVERLEY.

Several urgent defects render ship unserviceable. All necessary spares not carried. Work is (in) hand at St. Johns N.F. estimated date of completion 11/1.
(C.C.N.F. 1435Z/31 to Admty.)

N.A.1

Convoy N.A.1 composed of BERGENSFJORD and STRATHEDEN will be ready to leave Halifax carrying personnel for U.K. on 9/1.
2. Speed of slowest ship 17 knots.
3. Destination of both ships Clyde.
4. Through A/S escort will be provided by ROCKINGHAM and BEVERLEY. In view of experience gained on outward voyage BEVERLEY should join convoy from St. Johns N.F.
5. C.O.A.C. is requested to sail ships for position (X) in 47.00 N. 51.00 W. arranging local escort as requisite.
6. Route from position (X) will be promulgated by Admiralty.
(D.O.D.(H) 1510/31 to C.O.A.C. Halifax.)

/DJEBEL NADOR ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. 31.12.1941. Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

DJEBEL NADOR. Meter. Your 1659/26. DJEBEL NADOR sailed 20/12 for unknown destination with miscellaneous cargo including 30 tons rubber.
(B.A.D. 1517R/31 to Admty.)
N.I.D. Comment. B.A.D. Washington in 1719/29 reported that DJEBEL NADOR had arrived at Marseilles on 22/12.)
W.D. Note.- See also 1941/31.

French Shipping. Meter. Algiers 30/12 B.2 Oran Departures - 19/12 MONT SAINT ECCLAIR, 20/12 DJEBEL NADOR, G.G. TIRMAN. 21/12 SEBAA, 23/12 MARIE LOUISE LE BORGNE, PLUTO, 24/12 G.G. CAMBON, MOSTAGANEM. Departures - 15/12 SAINT SAUVEUR, 17/12 SEBAA, 21/12 VILLIERS. Nemours. Departures - 22/12 SAINTE CHRISTINE. Destinations not stated.
(B.A.D. 1941R/31 to Admty.)

QUEEN OF BERMUDA. Your 1326A/25. Is QUEEN OF BERMUDA to be sailed independently from Halifax if she can arrive in time to sail with N.A.1 9/1?
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 21142/31 to Admty.)

ALBATROSS. 1. B.A.R.M's 1528R/30 (N.T. in W.D.)
Request you will reply.
2. Your 10120/30. Approved.
3. In view of possible U-boat activity off E. Coast of American remaining aircraft should be retained on board.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 2254A/31 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

...r Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAI...

Ships Attacked.

CARDITA.

Following has ...
00' W., mined. ...
...SS Read posi...
(CARDITA, 1828...
Detach one Cor...
in 59° 18' N. ...
detached to re...
(C. in C. W.A. ...
CARDITA torped...
approx. at 200...
(Valentia Rd.'...
2112/31).
Request you wir...
ST. MELLONS and ...
Foyle at 0500A/1...
to assist s.s. C...
made. CAROLINE M...
300 K/cs. (F.O.I...
N.O.I.C. Campbelto...
Abandoned ship, hi...
all boats have gone...
approx. at 2000 G.M...
(CARDITA 2133/31).
ST. MELLONS and VI...
MOLLER off entrenc...
then to proceed wi... ...ough 57°
Tanker CARDITA (posit... ...y is
24' N. 09° 10' W. N.... ...ngly.
requested to sail VIZAL... ...VIZALMA, ST. MELLONS
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 2145A/31 t...
CAROLINE MOLLER, N.O.I.C Londonderry)
CARDITA torpedoed (positon).
Carry out A/S sweeps pasing through this position
on passage. (F.O.C. (D) H.F. 2150A/31 to Capt.
D.17).
Your 1933A/31. My P.C. and S. 060° 34' N. 020°
22' W. 109° 10.5 knots. E.T.A. 2000Z/1. Weather
report. (GARDENIA, 2203Z/31 to C. in C. W.A.)
F.O.I.C. Greenock 2119A/31. ...ailed CAROLINE
MOLLER. (N.O.I.C. Campbelt...n, 2211A/31 to
F.O.I.C. Greenock).

Submarines Reported.

Estimated approx. position of U/Bs.
(D.D.I.C. 1439A/31, 1440A/31

1654A — 1 U-boat northbound in 049 N. 010° W.
(F.O.S., 2054A/31 to S/Ms on Patrol in Area A.)

1805. — Ref. Admty. message AF. 59° 18' N. 12° - 50' W.
at 1805/31 G.M.T. (D.D.I.C. 1845Z/31 to G.B.M.S.
Area 1)

TELEGRAM

PERSONAL

TO BE OPENED BY ADDRESSEE ONLY

Most Secret

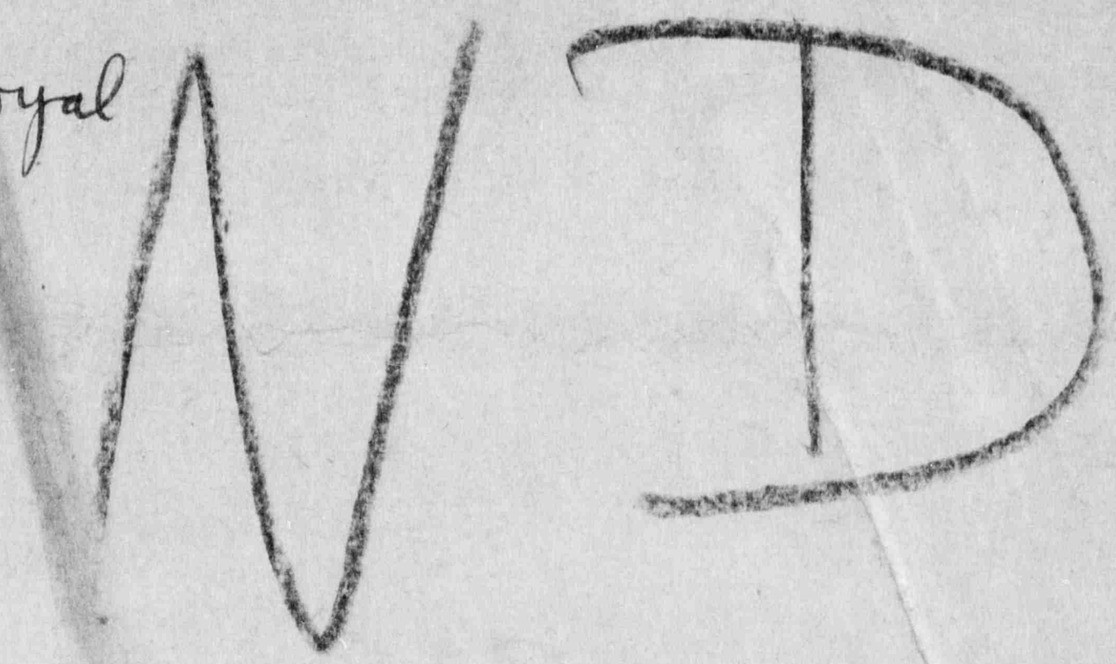
Casualty Fleet - enclosed

Operations Volume. Sept. 1941

War Diary. October 10th - 18th 1941

For Stragey at Park Royal

(HS/T.S.D.



War Plans-
Greece

Owing to vital defence commitments elsewhere there can be no question of taking Greece under our protection.

2. Action to be taken in event of Italian attack on Greek territory:-

(a) Despatch of Allied detachment to Crete to help Greeks.

(b) Allied control of E. Mediterranean and Aegean Sea communications.

This should limit whole scale of Italian effort against Greece.

3. In addition French propose to despatch limited forces to Salonika, Milos, Selamis, Navaino, Argostoli. These would be a French commitment if carried out.

4. Difficult to reach finality with French in present critical situation in France and our own present limited Air and Land forces.

(Adty. 0051/1 to C. in C., Med.)

Patras reports in Ankara opinion effective resistance in event of Italian occupation of Western Greek harbours is doubtful as only inadequate Infantry detachments are available. (S.O. (1) Alexandria 1932/2)

Crete

Arrangements concerted between British and French Staffs in London and Paris in order to ensure that there is no misunderstanding about execution order for sailing of expedition. (A.C.N.S. (F) 2322/3 to C. in C., Med.)

War Plans

Re Adty. 1840/5. My intentions at onset of hostilities are entirely governed by short notice to carry out opperation for occupation of Crete. Actual operation will be carried out by 2 cruisers carrying troops supported by a division of destroyers, followed a day later by 4 French cruisers now at Beirut ready to embark troops.

2, 3, 4. Covering forces, Canal defence, submarine patrols.

5. Strongly urge occupation of Crete be proceeded with whatever the political situation, unit is desired to use Suva Bay as fuelling base during operations in central Mediterranean and Aegean.

/6.....

War Plans, Contd.

6. Plans for main fleet on outbreak of war.

7. Plans if Malta attacked from sea.

8. Possibility of keeping force of cruisers and destroyers in central area toprey on Libyan traffic.

9. Should Turkey enter war on our side.

10 Re paras 2 and 6, after meeting other calls there are insufficient destroyers remaining to take whole Battle Fleet to see together. (C. in C., Med. 2317/6 and correction

Haifa Conference concluded 4/6 (1) Dodecanese (a) Turks still wedded to intention capture Rhodes by assault but have no plan ready. No prospect of success for some time.

(b) Franco-British proposal was for capturing smaller islands first.

(c) French pressed strongly for Weygand's proposal to concentrate air forces of 3 nations for crushing blow, then dispersing and reconcentrating for similar action when opportunity offered.

(2) Turks apposed to any preliminary action against islands until assualt on Rhodes, except such naval and air action as needed to obtain command of sea and air. They will provide no airforce for 1 (c). British also are unable to provide.

(3) Conference considered that decision on para 1 must be settled now by C's in C. (4?

(4) Agreed essential to capture Rhodes as soon as possible. Planning proceeding.

(5) Project held up until suitable craft for movement of force in dark hours from Marmaris and Fethiyeh to Rhodes are available. Medtn. being combed. Early despatch of M.L.C's from U.K. urged.

(7) Made clear that with Italy hostile Allied Naval force could not be available initially inside Straits or in Black Sea.

(9) Conference considered successful.

(11)French consider Turks will not enter war till after seeing result of first naval action but British attaches do not agree with this opinion (C. in C., Med. 0131/7)

/Re F.O. Tel.....

Med.

Red Mediterranean Volume.
Most Secret.

June 1940.

War Plans. Contd.

Re F.O. Tel. 358 of 28/5. to Ankara pointing out that Doescanese are strongly defended and operation cannot be undertaken for some considerable time after outbreak of hostilities. (C. in C., Med. 0436/8)

Your 1137/5. At the moment, with the decisive battle on Western Front now in progress, the fighter aircraft cannot meet immediate requirements.

Re para 5. it has been decided that Allied aircraft attack on industrial areas in Northern Italy will take place immediately on outBreak of war. (1st S.L. 1708/8 to C. in C., Med.)

Your 2317/6 A para 5. Regret that for political reasons occupation of Crete can only be carried out as authorised in Adty. 1728/30/5.

B. Para 10. Shortage of destroyers and handicap it imposes on you is fully realised, but situation in Home Waters prevents any further reinforcements (1st S.L. 0028/11 to C. in C., Med.)

GRAMPUS Lost

GRAMPUS due Malta 1500/17 from patrol, is overdue; has not been possible to establish W/T communication with her. (F.O.i/c Malta 1815/19 to C. in C., Med.)

Proposed Attack on Rhodes

Part 1. A French battalion has reached Cyprus to help in defence of Island.

(b) Mittelhauser has made all preparations for attack on Rhodes from Larnaca which forms excellent base. He asks for co-operation of British aircraft.

(c) Expeditionary Force here is intact and ready to help in defence of Straits or Suez Canal.

(e) Munitions for 3 months even if daily fighting.

Part 2. Main objects of operation against Rhodes- to cause damage, influence Turks, lower Italian morale, raise French morale. Important we should meet M's whishes.

/Part 3.....

Proposed Attack on Rhodes, Contd.

Part 3. One of main enemy objectives is Medtn. Basin. Must and can be held. Air factor all important. General prepared to send a division to defend Suez if necessary. Nogues, he knew, is prepared to give similar help Gibraltar.

Darlan's message to French Navy is to form basis of attitude of troops. Same determined attitude is sown by mist of his staff.

(No. 8. (Salisbury Jone Mission) 1915/18)

As result of French collapse there are now no forces in W. Medtn. between Gib. and Italian Fleet base.

2. aircraft at Gibraltar (6 Londons and 3 Swordfish) are inadequate for r/c necessary to give warning of approach from East of enemy force.

3. Number of destroyers available at Gib. at any time probably not exceeding 8. These are too few to provide for patrol, convoy escort and screen for 3 large ships. (F.O.C.N.A. 1522/25)

4. No cruiser available to support patrol in event of raid.

5. If raid by Italian surface force took place first warning might well be arrival of first shot.
6. There are no alternative bases hear.
7. V.A. (A) and I would like to be informed of future policy for employment of forces now based Gib.

8. Urgent requirements are (a) Sunderlands for distant reconnaissance (b) At least 3 modern cruisers to support patrol and protect ARK ROYAL as HOOD alone could not deal with divided enemy forces. (c) submarines. (d) More destroyers. (F.O.C.N.A. 1522/25)

MAY
~~JUNE~~, 1940.

Spanish Situation

Interview with Minister of Marine. Spain taking measures to defend herself against anyone. Precautions concerned Balearic Island, Melilla, and to lesser extent Spanish Mediterranean seaboard. Warned him against German and Italian efforts to suggest an Allied attempt to forestall Italian action in, for instance, Majorca. Incident of alleged ship firing on Spanish vessel at Las Palmas was mentioned. He replied facts were one shell fell near German steamer May 9, local authorities believed French patrol vessel responsible but established shot due to negligence. He denied rumoured Italian request to mine certain areas Balearic Islands, admitting Italians have asked for certain naval and air facilities which have been refused. Believed Italians intend to enter the war if Allies sustained reverse. Last Italian mechanics and wireless ratings now removed from Majorca. Is confident Spain can resist attack. Asked whether we would come to her assistance. I said yes, if we were asked. Fifth column activities mentioned. He agreed stricter police control wanted. In conclusion he emphasized Spain's genuine desire to remain neutral. Gratitude to Germany and Italy for help has no influence to policy. Believe this attitude genuine and represents settled policy after many hesitations but not enough attention is yet paid to fifth column and possible traitors. (N.A., Madrid, 2113/12).

Med. Mediterranean Volume.
Most Secret.

JULY, 1940.

Fighters, Malta — Regret impossible at present to send any fighters but consideration is being given. Aircraft unable now to fly over French territory and there are therefore only two methods of getting planes to Malta, first by flying off a carrier sent well into Mediterranean, record, subsequent to establishment of Near East Route via Nigeria and Egypt, to fly planes from Mersa Matruh. Neither method feasible at present. (War Office, to Govr., Malta, 1200/1).

Italian Transports — Risk of fuelling light craft and flying boats can only be accepted at night. Limitation imposes severe restriction on operations in Central Mediterranean. In consequence, can only take intermittent action against Italian transport and supply ships to Lybian ports. More stoppage of supplies necessary for air reinforcements of vital importance to Army in Egypt. Request most urgently immediate consideration be given to sending more fighters to Malta. Should be grateful also for more Sunderlands. (C. in C., Med., 1605/1).

My 1430 Part Two. Ref. Part One after (d) insert "only five destroyers could accompany force".

3. Such attacks would be "Pinprick" only but can be synchronized with C. in C. Mediterranean operation.

4. Disadvantage of "Pinprick" policy putting Italians on their guard.

5. Alternative is to fly 12 T S R off ARK ROYAL from position south of Sardinia to arrive Malta dawn. Aircraft to attack from Malta and be retrieved at subsequent date. ARK ROYAL would then be left with 9 T S R and 18 Skuas.

6. Important requirement for operations against Italian ships in southern harbours is air reconnaissance from Malta giving exact position of ships up to last moment before attack.

7. Substitution of longer endurance destroyers for 'V' Class and 'W' Class would be of great assistance for future operations of this type.

8. Subject to reply to my 1040/7 propose sailing pm/8. (V.A. "H" 1430/7 to Adty.)

My 1430/7 and your 0419/7. After appreciation with V.A.A. consider taking Force H into S.E. corner of Tyrrhenean Sea for air attack on Taranto or Augusta not worth results likely to be achieved for following reasons:

(a) Surprise would be most unlikely.

(b) Striking force would be only 12 S R and 9 Skuas.

(c) Attacks would be better carried out from East or from Malta without taking capital ships into dangerous area with little prospect of using them.

(d) Consider therefore that unless favourable target is presented proposal be limited to Cagliaru area where surprise may be achieved and "V" class and "W" class destroyers can be used.

(V.A.H. 1430/7 to Adty.)

Assume it has not been overlooked that cruisers have not even an outfit of ammunition on board, and reserves still some way off. (C. in C., Med. 1051/7 to Adty.)

Note Remainder of signal is precised in War Diary.

Operation Against Italy

Decided that operation against RICHELIEU will be carried out by HERMES and 8-in cruisers and that operation against JEAN BART must wait. V.A.(H) to carry out operation against targets on West coast of Italy, in Sicily and possibly Sardinia, for which suggested to use HOOD, VALIANT, ARK ROYAL, ARETHUSA, and 7 modern destroyers. V and W class destroyers might be taken part of the way as additional screen. Objectives left to discretion, but following worth considering:- (a) Torpedo aircraft attack on warships in Taranto and Augusta or elsewhere (b) Attack by surface ships on any warships suitably placed. C. in C., Mediterranean, is operating in Eastern Basin at same time. (1st S.L., 0419/7 to V.A. Force H.)

Encounter with Italian Fleet

I feel this afternoon's engagement was a set piece and we were expected to pass over a hive of submarines and come under heavy bombing attacks close to land. I had the advantage of receiving signification of many of Italian C. in C. Signals. His plan was to fire a few salvoes and disappear from (?sight) in dense smoke, then attack with destroyers, submarines and aircraft. All this in fact occurred. Italian shooting fairly good. WARSPITE only was outranged. (C. in C., Med., 1937/9, via F.O.I.C., Malta, 0710/10).

War Diary

JULY, 1940.

Appreciation Destroyers' Endurance.

My 1215/11, part 1. Following are main points arising from recent operations.

(a) With limited endurance of destroyers I cannot average more than 15 knots, and at this speed best V. and W. class can barely reach Sardinia and E. and F. class reach Genoa or West Sicily. DOUGLAS and WRESTLER cannot go much beyond Minorca.

(b) Having tested Italian air attack, it appears in favourable weather conditions they can locate and attack to the distance of 250 miles from Sardinia with efficiency at least comparable to Germans. (S.O., Force H., 1210/11).

Menace of Air Attack

My 1215/11, part II. In view of (a) and (b) and assuming 16 hours daylight, Force H will come under air attack for up to one and a half days when attacking Sardinia, two days when attacking Genoa and West Sicily, and two and a half days when attacking Naples or Taranto. Under these conditions I require guidance whether damage to ARK ROYAL can be accepted or whether it is necessary to restrict her employment to operations likely to produce results of sufficient military or political importance to justify her being put out of action and the loss of her a/c. (S.O., Force H., 1212/11).

Raiding Force Proposed

My 1215/11, part III. Hits on capital ships must be expected but in spite of lack of dock and repairing facilities at Gibraltar this does not appear to be equally important. If damage to ARK ROYAL can be accepted, I would propose using raiding force such as HOOD, ARK ROYAL, ARETHUSA, ENTERPRISE and five or six E, and F. class destroyers operating at 25 knots in zone open to air attack, or possibly including VALIANT and operating at 22 knots. In this case it will be necessary to oil destroyers at sea for which an experienced oiler is required. The substitution of ILLUSTRIOUS for ARK ROYAL would reduce risk of carrier being put out of action. (S.O. Force H., 1215/11).

JULY 1940.

A. Policy of H.M. Govt. is to maintain a strong force in the Eastern Mediterranean as long as possible, and also to maintain a force at Gibraltar.

B. The role of these Forces would be:-

(i) Eastern Mediterranean Force.
In accordance with the policy you are adopting.

(ii) Gibraltar Force.
Control of the Western exist of the Mediterranean, and to carry out offensive operations against the coast of Italy as far as possible.

C. Desirable to consider what the composition of the two Forces should be in order to carry out the above.

D. In any re-distribution there must be:-

(a) A long term policy, as time will be necessary for a re-distribution of ammunition reserves, etc.

(b) A short term policy of the re-distribution which are desirable at the present time.

E. Factors to be taken into account.

(i) The role of the Eastern Force and Force H, as given above.

(ii) The strength and possible disposition of the Italian Battlefleet.

(iii) Air menace.

(iv) Repair facilities.

F. Re E. (ii), at the moment the Italian Battlefleet only consists of two ships, but there appears no reason why 6 ships should not be available in a short time.

G. Re E. (iii), appears Italian high bombing is as good as German, and therefore the situation would not be materially altered if the Germans sent high bombing aircraft to Italy. There has, however, been no mention of dive bombing by the Italians, and if the Germans sent some Ju.88 to Italy, the situation would undoubtedly be altered for the worse. The range of the Ju.88 is 2000 miles.

H. Re E. (iv), possible that you will be able to judge to what extent damage from bombing can be repaired with your facilities in Eastern Mediterranean.

I. On the assumption that BARHAM might be made available for the Mediterranean, you should report what Capital ships should be in the Eastern Force and what in Force H.

J. If repair facilities in the Eastern Mediterranean are inadequate to deal with damage from bombing would it be desirable to maintain a spare battleship of "R" Class in Canal area.

K. Re Carriers. On assumption that both ARK ROYAL and ILLUSTRIOUS available for Mediterranean, would you prefer that the ILLUSTRIOUS should be in the Eastern Mediterranean and the ARK ROYAL in the Western Mediterranean, or vice versa? Armour and number of aircraft carried should be taken into account.

L. Also, in view of the lack of shore fighters, do you consider that Carriers in the Mediterranean should have a larger proportion of fighters at the expense of T.B.Rs?

M. Should any re-distribution of Capital Ships or Carriers be decided upon, should exchange take place through Mediterranean or round the Cape? Difficult to assess risk in passing ships through the area between the Bona/Sardinia line and Malta.

(1st S.L. 0227/15 and 2300/16 to C.-in-C. Med).

IMPORTANT

Your 1619/14. para 7 (iv). You will no doubt make suggestions when replying to Admiralty telegram 0227/15.

(1st S.L. 1045/15 to C.-in-C. Med).

JULY 1940

War Plans.

Reference Adty. 0227/15 following are my views.
2 reviews. Spain is assumed neutral.
France semi hostile, the vital (corrupt group) importance of having the North African coast at least is evident.

3. Italian policy. (a) In Western Medit. the most direct harm to British interests lies in attacks on Gibraltar or a break out into Atlantic. Both seem unlikely while Spain remains neutral and there is every reason to suppose that Italian fleet will not go far from its bases.

(b) In Eastern Medit. there is a concentration of Italian interests. Italians are used to idea that their main danger lies in Eastern Medit. dominated by British Fleet.

(c) The vulnerable points on Italian West coast are more easily covered by air protection than those in South owing to relative position of Sardinia and Sicily. On the other hand (corrupt group) area vital to industry lies in North West.

(d) My conclusions from above is that while Italians will keep a certain portion of force to protect their Western coast particularly with force H working from Gibraltar preponderent force will be based Messina Taranto and Augusta.

4. British Tasks.

(a) East. Destruction of enemy Naval forces protection of Egypt Palestine and Syria interruption of Black Sea and Aegean trade and of Libyan and dock communications.

(b) West. Interruption of all trade to Italy and possibly France attacks on Western Coasts. Control of exit from Mediterranean.

5. British dispositions. My opinion the more powerful force must be in Eastern Medit. Reasons.

6. Composition of forces.

(a) Eastern Medit. WARSPITE, VALIANT, MALAYA possibly BARHAM (see below) ILLUSTRIOUS EAGLE two eight inch cruisers one AA cruiser and two convoy sloops, rest of fleet as at present.

(b) Comments on (a). Essential there should be at least two capital ships whose guns can cross enemy line at 26 thousand yards and who are fast enough to have some hope of catching up with enemy. It is also necessary to have at least two cruisers who can act similarly in van. On 9/7 our

cruisers were out numbered, out gunned and out ranged and thus could not control area ahead of battle fleet. YORK and EXETER are particularly required owing to being small targets. I am of opinion we are over insured against air in Red Sea and that CARLISLE should come to Mediterranean with two convoy sloops to provide A.A. escort for convoys now being carried out by large cruisers. The Air Forces in Italian East Africa are a waning effort and this is the one place where our Air Force can really get at them. First convoy (BD One) up the Red Sea was not attacked at all.

ILLUSTRIOUS and EAGLE in combination will provide striking force without which faster Italian Fleet cannot be "fixed" double also large measure of fighter support without which experience has shown unjustifiable hazards are incurred when operating in Central Medit. Intend to employ EAGLE also in Red Sea against Massawa and shore objectives. Ample reserve of fighter and T.S.R. should be provided so that proportion in carrier can be varied to provide very strong fighter support or a powerful striking force according to operation contemplated. VALIANT would also provide R D F which no ship of present fleet has got.

The "R" class battleships can be released and sent via Cape to Gibraltar or elsewhere since in face of present scale air attack they are simply a source of constant anxiety. If BARHAM were available I should welcome her so as to provide a reserve of force, because unlike Western Mediterranean the passage of any reinforcements will be either a major fleet operation or else mean delay of at least 6 weeks and if I was meanwhile reduced to two battleships, capital ship force would be on the weak side.

(c) Western Mediterranean. HOOD, ARK ROYAL, four "Arethusa" class, one and half flotillas, one or two "R" class Battleships.

(d) Comments on (c). The Western Force for reasons already given should not have to meet very heavy forces and is to my mind primarily a raiding force.

It should attack in Gulf of Genoa with objectives such as Turin and Milan as well as coast ports. The "R" class battleships could cover Straits of Gibraltar and provide support on which to fall back in emergencies.

7. I consider that with forces proposed the Mediterranean can be dominated and Eastern Mediterranean held indefinitely provided the following matters also receive attention.

(a) Malta. Proper fighter protection.

Alexandria. As stated in para. five.

(b) Adequate reserves and spares are essential for repairs.

(c) Air co-operation. Replacements for flying boats are essential.

8. Passage of reinforcements. By carrying out a concerted movement it should be possible to pass reinforcements through Mediterranean but it would probably be desirable to do it all in one operation. (C.in C.Med.2259/16)

C. in C.Mediterranean 2259/16. On assumption Spain is neutral, I concur generally, subject to following remarks.

2. Unless Italian morale can be shaken decisively at reasonable cost to ourselves, raids on Italian coast by Naval Forces alone will not assist national object which I assume is at present to counter attempts to defeat us before winter and to maintain economic pressure.

3. In existing conditions of visibility and daylight which prevent surprise and evasion and with present poor asdic conditions advantage lies with the enemy. Necessity for oiling destroyers at sea is also (?handicap) vide my 1215/11., Para.5.

My 1110/18. Part Two.

4. Raids would, moreover, provide enemy with opportunity he seeks for reducing us by attrition, which in view of future commitments we can ill afford especially if Gibraltar becomes unuseable.

5. Possibility of attacks on Gibraltar developingwhile Force H is on four days expedition to Italian Coast with only sufficient fuel to return to Gibraltar must be considered also.

6. My conclusion raids should only be undertaken in exceptionally favourable weather and if armoured carrier is available. An R D F Ship is also essential.

Part three.

7. Fully concur with C. in C. Medit. that raids on N.W. Italy by bombers from U.K. should be resumed.

8. On the other hand, sweep by Force H in Western basin will stifle trade, cause diversion of Italian effort and relieve pressure on Eastern Mediterranean when specific operations are being undertaken by Eastern Force.

9. Possibility of Spain remaining neutral for prolonged period appears remote and this should be taken into account in allocation of force between east and west.

Part four.

10. With Gibraltar unusable there appears to be three methods of maintaining control of Atlantic. (a) Covering Force to Westward of Gibraltar (b) Hunting group in focal area (c) escort.

11. Para. ten (a) Appears only method sufficiently economical to enable force required by C. in C. Medit. to be made available.

12. Using Freetown or U.K. as bases, efficient cover would be very low and early capture of base in Canary Is. appears to offer only satisfactory solution.
(S.O. Force H. 1110/18 for Adty.)

Ammunition Supplies

Reference Adty. 1914/19. I do not consider it would be prudent in present circumstances to risk this precious ammunition through Mediterranean even in 16 knots ships.

2. 15 inch ammunition situation can be accepted for a time as even if WARSPITE and VALIANT expended half an outfit during operation of getting ILLUSTRIOUS and VALIANT through they would not be likely to need any more ammunition for a "time" in emergency WARSPITE could adjust her material to use 15 inch four C R H ammunition held in reserve for R Class Battleships.

3. I propose whole of reserve of ammunition mentioned less additional 4.5 inch that can be packed into VALIANT and ILLUSTRIOUS should be sent in fastest ships possible (certainly of not less than 16 knots) round the Cape of Good Hope now or as soon as ships can be loaded. I would arrange special escort through Red Sea. If these ships proceed with utmost despatch they should arrive Alexandria in about 5 weeks.

4. Meantime suggest sending extra 4.5 inch ammunition to Gibraltar for VALIANT and sail her and ILLUSTRIOUS through Mediterranean about 14 days after ammunition carrier leaves United Kingdom. They should then be here only two to three (?days) ahead of their meeting.

5. Further 12 Hurricanes for Malta to be flown off by ARGUS as already arranged for first twelve. Maintenance personnel and as (group omitted) supply of stores as possible to be embarked in H.M.S. VALIANT who wuld call at Malta by night.

6. A.A. guns for Malta would have to be sent in the fast ammunition ship round Cape of Good Hope though perhaps light guns could go in VALIANT.

7. With reference to paragraph 4 is ti not possible to obtain some really fast ships of the order of 25 knots for this work even if not primarily designed to take cargo. This would save at least a week and ships could perhaps also bring some aircraft and stores so badly needed with orders to A.O.C. Mediterrancan.

8. As regards eight inch cruisers ROYAL SOVEREIGN is ready to sail now to replace eight inch cruiser on escort work. I have not enough destroyers to take 4 battleships and EAGLE to sea simultaneously in any case. Even one eight inch cruiser would be very welcome at the earliest moment.

9. Docking is a most difficult problem at Alexandria and it is highly desirable that any ship joining eastern fleet should have been recently docked.
(C. in C., Med., 1301/21 to Adty.)

Operation "HURRY"

Your 0205/22. The 8th D.F. and 13th D.F. are pooled for Local Patrol escort and operations. Of the existing 10 destroyers at present available for all purposes, three are under repair. To provide a continuous screen of four for ARK ROYAL would thus leave only three for patrols and to screen three heavy ships should it be necessary to proceed to sea. A 4th destroyer will however be added to ARK ROYAL's screen until clear of Straits. For operation "Hurry" maximum 12 destroyers will be available to screen three capital ships and two carriers, and this depends upon all destroyers accompanying ARGUS being fit for immediate service and all patrols in future escorts being withdrawn.
(F.O.C. Force H., 1110/22 to Adty.)

Do you intend to carry out any operation to synchronise with operation "Hurry"? (F.O.C., Force H. to C. in C., Med., 1314/22).

Reply. Battle Fleet will be at sea covering south bound Aegean Convoy (C. in C., Med., 1903/22

My 1903/22 Battle Fleet will be to westward of Crete on 28/7 July and 29/7 which should act as a diversion for (? "Hurry").
(C. in C., Med., 1205/23).

Crete. Following from Chiefs of Staff:-
Plan for occupation of Crete having been nulified by French collapse, question arises whether new plan is desirable. It appears to us that strategic importance of Crete has not been decreased by recent events but that difficulty of providing troops for occupation may be insuperable. On assumption that we should not be the first to violate Greem neutrality, request your agreed views on (a) whether it is still desirable in present circumstances to deny Crete to Italians, and (b) whether the necessary forces and shipping can be provided from resources at your disposal.
(1st S.L. 2040/23 to C. in C., Med.)

Corinth Canal — Adty. 0058/18 para 4. Only effective way of dealing with Corinth Canal is to block it. Suggest this operation be put in hand now with or without Greek Govt. connivance according as to which is considered more politically desirable. It is a matter for consideration whether block would be more effective by damaging canal itself or sinking a ship across it. Failing other method magnetic mines laid from aircraft might be used. (C. in C., Med., 2019/23 to Adty.)

Organisation. Medit. Fleet Force H. ROYAL SOVEREIGN. — 1,2,3,4 see War Diary.
5. It is anticipated that preliminary movements will be completed so that the principal reinforcements for the Mediterranean Fleet will be ready to leave Gibraltar on or about 15 August. (1st. S.L. 1700/25).

Dispositions on completion of "HURRY" — My 1700/25. The following is the general intention for the movements preliminary to the operation of reinforcing the Mediterranean.

2. On conclusion of operation "Hurry", the following ships to return to U.K.

(a) HOOD to replace RENOWN as flagship of B.C.S. Flags of V.A.B.C.S. and S.O. Force H. to be exchanged on arrival at Scapa.

(b) VALIANT to dock and embark reserve ammunition, H.A. Guns and other stores for Malta and the Middle East.

(c) ARETHUSA to be taken in hand for repairs, subsequently to join H.F.

(d) ARGUS to embark Hurricanes for repetition of operation HURRY, which will form part of reinforcement operation.

(e) All destroyers at Gibraltar except 13th Flotilla.

Dispositions on completion of "Hurry" (Contd.)

3. On completion of 2(b) and (d) the following ships will sail together for Gibraltar.

RENOWN, VALIANT, ILLUSTRIOUS, ARGUS, YORK, SHEFFIELD, CALCUTTA, COVENTRY, and destroyers as in 2(e). (1st S.L. 1950/25 to C. in C., Med.)

Reinforcement of Medit. Fleet ROYAL SOVEREIGN

My 1700/25 and 1950/25. You are requested to take under your command all forces engaged in the operation of reinforcing the Medit. Fleet, after the completion of the preliminary movements from U.K. to Gibraltar.

2. Report whether you consider it advisable that ROYAL SOVEREIGN should be passed through to Gibraltar at the same time in view of the added complication to an already difficult operation. (1st S.L. 1953/25 to C. in C., Med.)

Adty. 1953/25. Do not consider it advisable to pass ROYAL SOVEREIGN through to Gibraltar in view of her low speed and added complications. ROYAL SOVEREIGN is badly in need of docking and it si proposed that she should sail now round the Cape docking en route at Durban. Escort to Aden will be arranged from Mediterranean Fleet. (C. in C., Med., 1437/26).

Operation "HURRY"

Adty. 2357/24. Expect to sail for operation "Hurry" am/31.

(iii) Inform me should you require fourth destroyer for screening in Straits. (F.O. Force H. 1245/26 to V.A. (A)).

Haifa Air Defences

Air defences of Haifa are totally inadequate aggravated by want of any modern system of warning of approach of aircraft. Already half the employees and 50 American Engineers of I.P.C. and refinery have quitted. Further attacks are almost certain to destroy remaining oil supplies and in any case to cause complete cessation of work. Fighter protection and R.D.F. are essential at once if further fupply of oil is to be expected. (R.A.(D) Medit. 1805/26 to C. in C., Med.,)

1805/26 from R.A. (D) Mediterranean re Air Defence of Haifa should have been treated as most secret and given a PERSONAL distribution.

Crete

Ref. Adty. 2040/23. I agree that strategic importance has far from decreased and feel very strongly that we should at very least deny it to Italians. The Army and Air Force situation is however exceedingly difficult and matter is being urgently re-examined by them and a joint reply will shortly be made. (C. in C., Med. 2005/26)

Bombardment of Assab

Do you consider bombardment of Assab by ROYAL SOVEREIGN is practicable assuming that air reconnaissance, fighter protections, and distraction of enemy air forces is provided by R.A.F. from Aden?

Gibraltar War with Spain

Your 1220/17.

A. While it is probable that Gibraltar will eventually become untenable as a naval base we are not prepared to accept the principle that it must be evacuated before the outbreak of war.

B. At the same time we agree that it is undesirable for Force H to remain at Gibraltar for he first few days of war with Spain. Your plans should therefore be based on proceeding to sea shortly before outbreak of war if intelligence permits or, if not, immediately afterwards and carrying out attacks on Ferrol, Vigo or Cadiz.

C. On conclusion of these operations decision as to whether Force H should return to Gibraltar or proceed elsewhere will be taken by Adty.

D. Request you will signal outline plan of operations in accordance with para B. above. (1st Lord 1432/28 to S.O. Force H).

Operation "HATS"

Adty. 1953/25. Following is outline of my intentions for operation which will be known as HATS.

A. Composition of forces.

Force A. ARGUS and escort.

Force B. RENOWN and ARK ROYAL.

Force F. Reinforcements for Eastern Mediterranean

Force I. Mediterranean Fleet.

B.D.1 Forces A and B sail in company for reaching approx. 008° 00' E. at dawn D 3. Force F sails pm to be near Galita Island at dusk D 3. Force I sails pm from Alexandria to be nearing Malta dusk D 3.

D 2. All forces on passage to initial positions.

D 3. Force A flies off Hurricanes to Malta and retires for Gibraltar. Force B parts company with A during forenoon and proceeds to make detour towards Balearic Islands, to reach position for air attack on Genoa as ordered by F.O. Force H. Force F. passes Galita Island at dusk and proceeds at high speed to be well to the South East of Pantellaria at dawn D 4.
Force I arrives near Malta as shown and starts fuelling destroyers in Malta.

D 4. Force B launch air attack on Genoa and retire at high speed (? reassembling on) completion.
Force I and F r.v. South W. Malta.
VALIANT to Malta to discharge stores and rejoin.
CALCUTTA, COVENTRY and Force F destroyers to Malta to fuel and rejoin. Fuelling of Force I destroyers at Malta continues.

On completion of fuelling Force I and F proceed Alexandria.

D 5. Force A arrive Gibraltar. Remaining Force on passage to base.

D 6. A.M. Force B arrives Gibraltar. P.M. Medit. Fleet arrives Alexandria.

C. A small convoy including Oiler PLUMLEAF will be sailing from Alexandria to Malta under cover of Force I to arrive night of D 3/D 4. (corrupt group) and possibly a store ship from Malta will be sailing from Malta on D 4 for Alexandria. (C. in C., Med. 1757/28).

Operation "HATS".

Your 1757/28. Following are my remarks.
(a) Withdrawal of force B from Force A during forenoon D 3 will leave ARGUS protected by RESOLUTION and one cruiser only from air attack, for remainder of day.

(b) Retirement of force A during D 3 will probably disclose force F to enemy aircraft rendering subsequent diversion by force B largely ineffective.

(c) Division to Genoa starts from position south of Sardinia exposing ARK ROYAL to prolonged bombing and cannot be accomplished without oiling destroyers at sea, which is undesirable unless essential for achievement of main objects.

(d) Three weak forces will be widely spread pm on D 3 advantageously to Italian Fleet should (? "they" omitted) venture to westward force F would be without support.

(e).....

(e) To summarise - force B provides neither adequate support nor adequate diversion for forces A and F.

2. Following modification to group is proposed after consulting with V.A.(A).

(a) Force A to be abolished and ARK ROYAL to carry 6 ~~xxx~~ to 9 Hurricanes on flying deck. This will allow torpedo spotter reconnaissance to be operated.

(b) Forces B and F to leave Gibraltar together pm D 1, force F proceeding as in plan. Force B to use maximum speed for approach pm D 2 and night D 2/D 3 thus probably avoiding bombing altogether. ARK ROYAL to fly off Hurricanes dawn D 3 at longitude 007° 20' E.

(c) Force B then either - (4) to make diversion to northwest at high speed drawing enemy air from force F and bombing Alghero aerodrome dawn D 4, or 2 to reinforce force F against air and/or surface attack during D 3, parting company after dark and bombing Cagliari aerodrome dawn D 4.

(d) I favour (c) (2) above as this provides formidable concentration of ships fighters and A.A. guns. It might be possible to adopt (c) (one) decentralized and revert to (c) (2) if and when force F is found by enemy air.

3. If required further Hurricanes can be transferred by ARK ROYAL later. 2111/30.

Operation "HATS"

Adty. 1953/25. My 1757/28. Major difficulty in planning operation is provision of adequate destroyer escorts for Forces in Western Mediterranean. I can spare one division to proceed to Gibraltar to bring force R through but I consider six necessary for passage of narrows which would entail two destroyers from force H coming through to Malta and fuelling before return. To obviate this proposed Red Sea destroyers should proceed to Alexandria to arrive about 17/8 and remain with Mediterranean Fleet for about 10 days covering period of this operation and then return to Aden. I would then send 6 destroyers to Gibraltar.
(C. in C., Med., 1815/28).

Assab

Adty. 2010/27. Bombardment of Assab is a feasible operation but I consider to achieve any worthwhile result against the very limited targets in the area essential to use spotting aircraft. If operation decided upon desirable for a cruiser of Red Sea Force to meet ROYAL SOVEREIGN at Port Sudan where details of operation including supporting forces and air co-operation could be waiting and where ROYAL SOVEREIGN could wait with spotting aircraft.

2. Also necessary to consider if target justifies use of a battleship. (? It is) understood that R.A.F. have dealt and are dealing effectively with Macaaca aerodrome and remaining targets are of small importance unless reconnaissance reveals presence of Naval Force. The position of hospital(s) (corrupt group) C B 17 12 is also important.
(C. in C., Med., 2215/28 to Adty.)

Operations to support "Hurry"

The following operations by Medit. Fleet will be carried out in support of operation HURRY.

(a) Sweep by cruisers and destroyers into Aegean combined with a feint movement to the westward through Kithera Channel on evening 1/8.

(b) An advance by two battleships EAGLE and destroyer escort to a position between Crete and Libya during daylight 1/8, force turning back for Alexandria after dark.

2. These operations should give the impression of a general movement into central Mediterranean and tend to deter surface and and Air Force in Sicily and South Italy from ~~m~~ moving westward.

3. Regret I cannot do more but bulk of Medit. Fleet does not arrive at base from present operation of covering Aegean convoy till 30/7 and boiler cleaning etc. of destroyers is much behind hand. (C. in C., Med. 1439/29 to F.O.C., Force H.)

Operation "HURRY"

Following is summary of intentions for operation HURRY. Times zone minus one.

(a) Force H and H.M.S. ARGUS leave Gibraltar 0800/31.

(b) .....

War With Spain.

Admty. 1432/28. Assume objectives in order of importance should be (a) Spanish Cruisers, (b) Shipping, (c) Naval Bases, (d) Other Spanish Warships.
2. Programme depends mainly on subsequent fuelling facilities.
3. General line would be (a) Aircraft mining of Cadiz Harbour at earliest opportunity, (b) first dawn after leaving Gibraltar, bombardment and air attack on Cadiz shipping, docks and warships, (c) fourth dawn after leaving Gibraltar, air attack on warships and base Ferrol and or shipping at Vigo. Possible destroyer attack if destroyers available. (F.O.,Force H., 0658/31)

Part 2 of my 0700.

4. All Force H would be used for Cadiz but only ARK ROYAL, one capital ship (or two cruisers) and some destroyers for Vigo and Ferrol.
5. Escorting destroyers employed in second operation would probably just reach Milford Haven, Gibraltar, Azores or Madeira. Attacking destroyers would have to oil at sea. Oilers from Gibraltar would follow to meet this eventuality.
6. Request latest intelligence Vigo and Ferrol include photographs. (F.O.,Force H., 0700/31, to Admty).

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MOST SECRET.

AUGUST, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

In general agreement with your 2111/30/7 except one (D) of which I think there is little chance. I also favour your proposal 2 (C) (ii). This formidable concentration might well have excellent after effects. 2(C) (ii) has further the advantage that it makes for economy in destroyers.

Operational orders will now be made out based on my 1757/28/7 as amended by your 2111/30/7 para.2.
(C.in C. Med. 1007/1 to F.O. Force H.)

Re organising support for General de Gaulle in Tunis and possibly Morocco.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1511/1).

Operations.

After operation now in hand it is not intended to carry out any large scale operation until operation HATS. Owing to need for docking of ships and for destroyers' boiler cleaning and minor defects. The major part of Fleet will however be ready and I intend to carry out certain operations in Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean.
(C.in C. Med. 0955/1, to Adty).

Aircraft for Malta.

When present urgent fighter requirement for Malta has been met request striking force and general reconnaissance needs may be considered. Beaufort aircraft most suitable. If not available Hudsons next most suitable. Understand supplies of latter type available and could be flown Malta direct from U.K. Land based G.R. aircraft if operated from Malta in sufficient numbers could achieve more continuously and ecomically much of the sea reconnaissance now undertaken by Sunderlands which owing to the limited maintenance facilities at Malta can operate away from Alexandria for brief periods only. Moreover I must be in position to meet sudden reconnaissance calls from Flag Officers when operating temporarily in this area.

MEDITERRANEAN (Contd.)

Aircraft for Malta. (Contd.)

Am partly meeting such request from V.A. Force H as preliminary to operation HURRY and could not help him at all but for the presence of one Hudson here. We can now carry out nothing but local reconnaissance except what can be undertaken by our one Hudson which is available for checking shipping concentrations Sicily. This information constantly required. Targets in Sicily can only be attacked by F.A.A. Swordfish and scope of such operations is very limited. Suggest 1 complete T.B.G.R. Squadron of 15 aircraft would produce results here out of all proportion to numbers of aircraft involved.
(H.Q. Malta 1841/1).

Foreign Stations.

Operation "HATS".

Your 1757/28. Most important industrial targets in Italy are oil refineries of which one is at Leghorn in position 4200 yards 055 degrees from S.W. end of Diga Marzocca. Plant clearly distinguishable from air being marked by very large tanks. Also at Leghorn is 50,000 ton oil torage in position 1800 yards 047° from S.W. end of Diga Marzocca. Latter is visible from seaward and would provide target for ship bombardment if this is contemplated. Suggest objective of Force H in operation "Hats" is Leghorn and not repetitionnot Genoa where there is no target so easily damaged or so important as the refinery. Further details of these and other targets in Italy are being flown to Gibraltar and Alexandria shortly. Copies also being sent all sea route to Gibraltar.
(Head of M approved by A.C.N.S.(F) 1820/1 to C.in C. Med.)

63. My 1511/2. A paragraph one. The 4 destroyers will reach Malta at daylight about 4 days before operation and sail at dusk at high speed for Gibraltar. Request you will consider ostentatiously forming up a convoy on that day, possibly in MARSA SCIROCCO, with such merchant ships as you have available, dispersing them after dusk into Valetta harbours. Object to deceive enemy as to future movements of destroyers.
(C.in C. Med 1055/8 to F.O.I.C. Malta).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

It is for consideration whether Oiler PLUMLEAF should anchor at Marsa Scirocco and oil destroyers for this operation or berth in Grand Harbour.

C. Fleet would, be in the vicinity of Malta throughout daylight 27/8. Please request A.O.C. Mediterranean to be prepared to assist in defence of Fleet with fighter aircraft as much as possible.
(C.in C. Med. 1511/2 to F.O.I.C. Malta.)

Serial.	Number of Destroyers.	Arrived.	Leave.
(a)	five	0300	0600
(b)	H.M.S. COVENTRY H.M.S. CALCUTTA	0800	After disembarking stores.
(c)	four	0800	1100
(d)	nine	1100	1400
(e)	two	1600	1900

Three remaining destroyers, two from Gibraltar with Force F and GARLAND from Force I will be detached when serial (d) rejoins. These last three are to be sailed for Gibraltar night of 27th or 28th Aug. at your discretion.

Thence Force B will proceed to carry out a diversionary air attack against a selected target and Force F will pass between Cape Bon and Sicily to rendezvous with Mediterranean Fleet (Force I) A.M. 27/8 near Malta.

Westward passage of Force I will cover movement of small convoy consisting of Oiler PLUMLEAF and British Store Transport CORNWALL to arrive at Malta daylight 27/8.

B. Success of operation largely depends on rapid fuelling of destroyers and anti-aircraft cruisers at Malta.

Reinforcements Operation "HATS" Fuelling.

A. The reinforcements of Mediterranean Fleet by VALIANT, ILLUSTRIOUS, YORK, CALCUTTA, COVENTRY known as operation Hats is timed to commence 24/8. Prior to operation four Mediterranean destroyers will be sent to Gibraltar fuelling at Malta en route.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Reinforcements Operation "HATS" Fuelling.

Force B(RENOWN, ARK ROYAL Cruisers and destroyers) under F.O. Force H in company of Force F (Reinforcements and six destroyers) will proceed from Gibraltar 24/8 to be in the vicinity of Galita Island at dusk 26/8.

VALIANT Malta Supplies.

Your 1301/1 and para. D. (4) of your 1757/28 and para.2 (b) of Adty's 1950/25/7. It was understood that your intention was for VALIANT to call at Malta during Operation HATS. It was therefore decided to embark in VALIANT eight 3.7 inch A.A. Guns and ten Bofors guns together with certain personnel for Malta in addition to other urgent stores for Alexandria. Request confirmation that these arrangements for Malta should stand. (1st S.L. 1615/2).

Reinforcements. Bombing of Leghorn.

1820/1 Adty. Subject to remarks of F.O.C. Force H, I am now convinced that his proposal in paragraph two (c) (ii) of his 2111 30th July offers the best prospect of getting Mediterranean reinforcements through undamaged. The strong anti-aircraft concentration provided by combined forces may have most far reaching effect. If however, it is considered bombing of Leghorn should be undertaken and I feel there is much to be gained thereby, I suggest it should take place after forces F and B (see my 1757/28th July) have parted company always providing arrangements can be made to fuel destroyers of Force B.

Might it not be more economical to deal with target at Leghorn by long range bombers from U.K.?
(C.in C. Med. 1529/2 to Adty).

Hurricanes Middle East.

Your 1249/1. It is intended to send next consignment of 30 Harricanes in ARGUS to Takoradi leaving United Kingdom towards end of August. As these aircraft are fitted with long range tanks they will be flown to the Middle East and will be sent where required - including Malta if necessary - as decided by the A.O.C. in C. Further consignments each month will be sent by same route in merchant ships.
(D.N.A.D. 1729/2 to C.in C. Med.)

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Operation "HATS".

Your 1529/2. It does not appear to me that attack on Leghorn during operation Hats will assist achievement of object because attack could not take place until dawn 28/8. (ii) Consider Force H can best assist by bombing Cagliari and Aberero aerodromes dawn 27/8. (iii) If sea borne attack on Leghorn is required consider this should be separate and subsequent to operation, and be undertaken when there are sufficient destroyers for oiling at sea from oilers. (iv) Concur first will be more ecomonical to attack these targets from U.K. rather than to expose ARK ROYAL to such prolonged air attack. (v) Your 1511/2. Passage of two lots of unescorted destroyers from Malta to Gibraltar is undesirable but I do not see how it can be avoided unless Force H does passage from Galita Island to Malta by day which has obvious disadvantages.
(F.O.C. Force H. 2057/3 to C.in C. Med.)

Offensive Against Italy.

Your 1529/2 and F.O.C. Force H. 2057/3. Our object is to ensure the passage of reinforcements and Admiralty therefore concur that proposals of F.O.C. Force H. in paragraph 2 (c) (ii) of his 2111/30 should be adopted. Air Ministry hope to commence bombing Italian north-western districts about 10th August, carrying out thirty to fifty sorties by individual aircraft per week if weather conditions over Alps allow. This may draw Italian fighters away from southern aerodromes. If you concur, propose asking Air Ministry to make particular effort before Operation HATS.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1403/5 to C.in C. Med.)

Kismayu Bombardment.

C.in C. E.I. 1236/3. Consider air spotting is essential if any value is to be obtained. My (?impression) gathered from reading the effects and from recent interchange of signals is that KISMAYU is not the type of target on which to use a battleship's main armament at all. Do not think it is worth delaying ROYAL SOVEREIGN for this operation and suggest it should be left to a cruiser at next suitable opportunity. If it is decided to carry out operation consider ROYAL SOVEREIGN is quite capable of dealing with minor scale air attacks directed at COLOMBO.
(C.in C. Med. 1727/5 to Adty).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Independent Company. Raids on Italy.

Suggested to Governor Malta that an Independent Company of 18 Officers and 254 other ranks can be sent to Malta for offensive raids against Sicily and Tripoli. This he has accepted in principle, but has stated that no local craft are available. (ii) Employment of this force is partially dependent on the provision of fast landing boats which can be hoisted or towed, and on co-operation of naval forces. (iii) Such craft, which have an endurance of about 200 miles, are being purchased in U.S.A. and should be available in U.K. in two or three months. A proportion can be allocated to Malta, enough to transport this company. (iv) The problem of maintaining light craft at Malta until the scale of A/A defence is higher is fully realised, but we would be glad of your views on the possibility of employing the Company either from Malta or from the Fleet. The desirability of such operations is evident, and if you concur endeavour will be made to transport the company in H.M.Ships taking part in Operation HATS.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1730/6).

Reinforcement Operation "HATS".

My 1926/30. Para "E".
VALIANT to sail from Liverpool on 20/8 in company with ARGUS, S.S. ROYAL SCOTSMAN, FAULKNOR, FORESIGHT, FORESTER, FEARLESS and FURY.

2.
C.in C. W.A. to arrange R/Vs with VALIANT for ILLUSTRIOUS, SHEFFIELD, YORK, CALCUTTA COVENTRY and FIREDRAKE, and onward routeing to Gibraltar for all ships except ARGUS, who should be routed to Freetown.

3.
ILLUSTRIOUS, SHEFFIELD, YORK and FIREDRAKE should be sailed as arranged by C.in C. H.F. who is requested to provide necessary additional escort until clear of submarine zone.

4.
VALIANT should take all ships under her orders on arrival at R/V detaching ARGUS whe necessary.
(D.O.D.(H) 2235/8 to C.in C. H.F., C.in C. W.A.)

Canal Blocking.

Your 2019/23 and 1701/5. Information now being sought that contraband for Italy or Dodecanese is passing canal. If substantia amount is passing, blocking would be considered. Understood here that N.A. Athens could arrange blocking by sabotage. Magnetic mines would not be effective.(A.C.N.S (2345/8, to C.in C. Med.)

MEDITERRANEAN, (Contd.)

VALIANT.

My 2235/8. Request you will communicate at an early date to Admiralty and ships concerned the anticipated time and date ships will be required to sail for this operation.
(D.D.O.D.(H) 1600/10).

Operation "HATS", Date.

Request you signal, 8 days in advance if possible, date on which you expect to be ready to leave Gibraltar for Operation HATS. This day will be D One day. Operation orders will be sent to you by Destroyer which will join you at Gibraltar at least one day before Operation starts.
Orders are broadly framed and as far as Force B is concerned read:- Force B with Force F in company is to leave Gibraltar p.m. D One so as to pass longitude of Galita Island about 1700/D3. After passing this longitude and before dark at time selected by F.O. Force H. course of both forces is to be altered North eastward as though heading for Gaeta or Naples and this line of advance is to be maintained until it is fully dark. When fully dark Force F is to be detached to proceed as laid down in orders for Force F. (to rendezvous with Force I, in position 220 degrees Gozo Light 45 miles at 0800 D.4) After detaching Force F, Force B. is to proceed as directed by F.O. Force H. to carry out dawn air attack on target selected by F.O. Force H. returning to Gibraltar on completion.
(C.in C. Med. 1041/10 to F.O.Force H.)

If urgency of reinforcement so great as to justify risk of its loss on passage attended by possibly serious damage to Fleet, I am prepared to accept operation subject to any remarks by F.O.H. and to following considerations.

(a) Ships employed should be capable of making good a genuine 16 knots.

(b) Ships of convoy damaged so that speed is seriously reduced may be sunk without more ado.

(c) VALIANT will not be able to call at Malta. It is suggested therefore that a third ship should be included to carry high angle guns stores and more fighters, if possible, for Malta.

If decided to proceed with operation suggest some concealment of intention could be obtained by putting about vague rumours of impending offensive or blocking operations against objectives in Tyrrhenean Sea.
(C.in C. Med. 1209/11).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Assm'd Bgde. for M.E.

Admiralty 1022/10. Practicability of this operation can only be decided by trial. Possible that the convoy might pass unscathed or it might be a total loss. Operation would entail both Force H. and Mediterranean Fleet being subjected to continuous heavy bombing attack for much longer than would be otherwise necessary: more over, from time convoy is first seen steering eastward in Mediterranean there will be no doubt in enemy's mind that intention of the operation is a passage of ships through narrows.

French Relations.

No. 109, 11/8.
My immediately preceding telegram. Following suggested by French "friend" as line our propaganda might take in the following eventualities (a) If night bombers let convoy through. Let it be known by tracts and radio in French and Arabic that it is for the sake of "people" of France and by reason of request of General de Gaulle that we have made this gesture "to save the children of France from famine."
(b) If the Royal Navy does not let convoy through, and if serious incident should follow. Explain in detail in French and Arabic by radio and tracts reasons for our attitude. (e.g. blockade of Germany (a)in the interests of common victory, etc.) At the same time let it be known that any eventual reprisals which we might have to take for bombing of Gibraltar would be the responsibility of those who acting entirely under German orders had provoked said incidant.
(Consul-General 1325/11 to Governor, Gibraltar Tangier (Received from D.N.I. 1132/14).

French Relations.

No.240. My tel.No.106 of 10/8. Following additional information received from Francois.

(a) French convoy from Casablanca to Marseilles was to have been escorted by French Naval units to be drawn from French West Africa, but German permission for this was refused.

(b) If negotiations with British Authorities fail, convoy will nevertheless start for Marseilles.

(c) In eventuality described in para. 2 of my telegram under reference bombardment of Gibraltar will be undertaken by 10 French Naval aeroplanes, 60 land bombers accompanied by some 30 fighters Dewitine 520 Curtis land planes.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

French (Contd.) Relations.

2. Whilst anti-British elements which continue to dominate naval circles seem to wish bombardment to take place, General Norgues personally view it with disfavour as he fears direct reprisals will be taken on Rabat or Casablanca, but orders come from Vichy and he will obey them. Pilots generally not in favour of such action and "certain" majority of them would drop their bombs into the water.
(Consul-General, Tangier, 1325/11, to Gibraltar Received from D.N.I. 1132/14).

Submarine Reinforcements.

TRITON TRIAD TRUANT and TETRARCH are to be prepared to sail for Mediterranean as soon as possible after short refit. Date on which each submarine will be ready to sail is to be signalled when known. Submarine will probably proceed north about with first stop at Gibraltar. Every possible care is to be taken that preparations made do not compromise the secrecy of this movement.
(V.A.S. 1051/12).

Cape Route Adopted.

Your 1209/11 to Admiralty and V.A. Force H.
(a) It has been decided that all repeat all the M.T. ships and a personnel ship will proceed round the Cape.

(b) VALIANT will embark H.A.guns for Malta as previously arranged.

(c) It is essential that the M.T.Ships should make as quick a passage to Suez as possible and consequently they are being divided into two groups as follows.

Group I. DENBIGHSHIRE 18 knots with cruiser tanks and infantry tanks. A liner of not less than 18 knots which will take personnel for groups I and II. Escort YORK.

Group II. SYDNEY STAR 16 knots with cruiser tanks and infantry tanks. WAIOTIRA 17½ knots with light tanks. Escort AJAX.

D. It is intended that both groups shall sail with VALIANT on 20th August.

E. ARGUS will accompany Group II as far as Freetown.

F. AJAX is being sent you to replace NEPTUNE as former has latest type of R.D.F. for both warning and gun ranging and latter has been in commission three years.

G. If you can spare NEPTUNE on arrival of KENT or even earlier it would be helpful She should return to U.K. via the Cape.

MEDITERRANEAN, (Contd.)

Cape Route Adopted.

H. Request you will provide, from Mediterranean Fleet any additional escort for passage of Groups I and II through Red Sea as no delay in their arrival in Egypt can be accepted.
(D.O.D.(F) 0255/13 to C.in C. Med.)

Reinforcements.

My 2235/8. Decided that two groups, one of speed 18 knots and one of 16 knots, to be sailed in company with other forces which leave U.K. on 20/8. Group I (the faster) will consist of S.S. DENBIGHSHIRE and a liner escorted by YORK. Group II S.S. SYDNEY STAR, S.S. WAIOTIRA escorted by AJAX. The merchant steamers are loading at Liverpool and to be sailed in company with VALIANT. Group I, Group II and ARGUS to be detached when well clear of the Submarine Zone. Group I then to proceed independently to Freetown and onward passage to Mediterranean at maximum speed. Group II and ARGUS to remain in company until arrival at Freetown when Group II will be detached to follow Group I at their best possible speed. AJAX to be sailed in company with ships named in para.3 of my 2235/8. ROYAL SCOTSMAN (carrying Military Personnel) to proceed with main body to Gibraltar.
(D.O.D.(H) 1611/13).

Operation "HATS".

Intend taking Force H. into Altantic to accompany reinforcements from U.K. for last two days of their passage to Gibraltar in order to exercise ships.

To allow sufficient time at Gibraltar for fuelling etc., without giving enemy time to organize night air attacks on ships in harbour propose Force H. and reinforcements arrive Gibraltar late P.M. 25th August. Forces should then be ready to sail for operation HATS P.M. 26th August.

Request confirmation that reinforcements will sail to comply with this programme. 1508/13.

Suggest aircraft from ILLUSTRIOUS carry out moonlight or dawn bombing of air bases in Pantellaria and/or west Sicily flying off south of Skerki Channel and landing Malta to refuel and for subsequent recovery by ILLUSTRIOUS. Intend to carry out similar attack on Cagliari and/or other air bases with aircraft from ARK ROYAL.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Operation "HATS". (contd.)

Details of enemy bases will be given to ILLUSTRIOUS.
(F.O. Force H., 1603/13 to C.in C. Med.)

Operation I B.S. KENT.

Following operation is intended. 1st Battle Squadron and KENT leave Alexandria a.m. 16/8 heading for central Mediterranean, and turn South during night to carry out dawn bombardment of troop concentration area at Bardia and Fort Capuzzo returning to Alexandria on completion. (C.in C. Med. 1953/13).

Attack on Rhodes.

For R.A. Lyster and ILLUSTRIOUS. Under consideration to carry out air attack on Rhodes during return to Alexandria after operation HATS. Outline of operation:-

Fleet would pass through Kithera Channel shortly after dark in 2 groups, one carrier in each group, then along North coast of Crete and fly off just North of Kaso Strait before dawn.

All available Swordfish armed with 250 or 500 pound bombs would be flown off from both carriers to dive bomb objective at crack of dawn. Fulmars to be flown off later to arrive over target simultaneously.

Objectives Maritza Aerodrome for EAGLE and Kalato Aerodrome for ILLUSTRIOUS. Fulmars might be divided between objectives to protect Swordfish and would remain in the vicinity after attack to discourage enemy fighters taking off.

Flying on would be carried out to Southward of Kaso Strait under protection of Gladiator Aircraft from EAGLE and remaining Fulmars from ILLUSTRIOUS.

It is hoped to catch enemy bomber aircraft prepared to take off and destroy them on the ground. These aircraft have been very tiresome to fleet.

Full particulars of target will be forwarded to ILLUSTRIOUS at Gibraltar.

Small Incendiary bombs would also be required.

Request you will inform me if ILLUSTRIOUS will be able to undertake this and any further remarks you wish to make.
(C.in C. Med. 1901/14 to V.A.A.)

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Air Squadrons.

Adty. 1915/17/7. Request early information on following points:-

A. When additional Squadrons may be expected to arrive.

B. When I R aircraft for existing Squadrons in H.M.S. ILLUSTRIOUS will arrive.

C. Whether additional Squadrons at A will have complete crews.

D. It would be appreciated if a proportion of these crews especially Pilots and Observers could be sent in advance, as H.M.S. EAGLE is already short, and there are no reserves on the Station. I also wish to man some reserve Swordfish for operations on Libyan Coast from the shore aerodromes. (C.in C. Med. 1823/14).

Alexandria Balloon Barrage.

Your 2243/24/7. Following from Air Ministry

Question of Balloon Barrage for Alexandria fully investigated last May and found to be possible although difficult. Since then difficulties increased and home defence requirements greater. Limiting factor production of Hydrogen. Additional difficulties shortage of Balloons and fact that experience now shows hot sun to have very serious effect on balloons. Impossible to establish and maintain a balloon barrage in Alexandria for at least 6 months

Experiments shortly to be carried out with new small balloons requiring only one tenth hydrogen of ordinary balloon. If successful possibility of providing barrage of these for Alexandria will be investigated. Possibility of providing lethal kites also being investigated but doubtful if wind speeds at Alexandria are high enough. (Head of M. 0047/15).

Situation Crete.

Recent reports of situation arising between Italy and Greece making me very anxious about Crete. With Crete in Italian hands our difficulties will be heavily increased and there is at present no force organised from Middle East resources to go there and help to deny it to Italians. Seldom at present that I have not a force of cruisers and destroyers within easy distance, but this is

Situation Crete. (Contd.)

not enough as with their excellent reconnaissance the Italians know exactly when we have fleet out and can thus seize their opportunity. Would it be possible to urge the Greek Government to mobilise their force in Crete which amounts to about a division. Perhaps some financial assistance to mobilization might be an inducement. (C.in C. Med. 2229/15 to Adty).

My 1603/13. In view of other otherations intended for ILLUSTRIOUS and to avoid delay in passage of Narrows I would prefer that proposal to bomb Pantellaria and West Sicily be abandoned. In any case bombing of Pantellaria would probably be fruitless as aeroplanes are kept under ground. (C.in C. Med. 1035/15 to F.O. Force H.)

Reinforcements. Operation "BONNET". 1

(a) Should Italian advance in Western desert develop sufficiently slowly M.T. ships will proceed round the Cape as ordered in A.T.0255/15.

Should situation develop rapidly and drastic steps necessary two M.T. ships will be directed through the Mediterranean and the operation will be called BONNET.

(c) The two M.T. ships will be WAIOTIRA 17½ kn with cruiser tanks and DENBIGHSHIRE 16 kn with infantry tanks.

(d) It is necessary to have two plans, HATS and BONNET.

(e) Unless it becomes apparent before VALIANT and ILLUSTRIOUS sail that operation BONNET will be necessary all personnel will leave U.K. in DUCHESS OF BEDFORD and if BONNET is carried out those for M.T. in WAIOTIRA and DENBIGHSHIRE will be transferred at Gibraltar from her to H.M. ships and M.T. ships.

(f) Decision to adopt operation BONNET may be taken any time before Group I reach latitude of Gibraltar.

(g) M.T. ship SYDNEY STAR will proceed via the Cape.

(h) Should BONNET be ordered it is realised that H.A. guns now in VALIANT may not be able to be landed at Malta.

(i) In case of BONNET the suggestion contained in the last paragraph of your 1209/11 will be considered and condition (b) is accepted.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Reinforcements, Operation "BONNET". (Contd.)

(j) In case of BONNET, DUCHESS OF BEDFORD after transferring personnel at Gibraltar will be sailed under escort to ENTERPRISE to join SYDNEY STAR at Freetown. (1st S.L. 1043/15).

Adty. 1043/15. Possible plan for operation BONNET you may wish to consider.

(ii) Forces F. and B. as for operation HATS which includes "feint" to west and north of Iviza on D Two altering to south east between Iviza and Majorcaafter dark D Two.

(iii) M.T. ship makes whole passage from Gibraltar to Gulf of Hammemet independently under false colours relying on forces F. and B to absorb enemy attention.

(iv) M.T. ships would "feint" to westward of Gibraltar until dark D One and then keep 20 to 30 miles from North African coast and about 100 miles to south and west of forces F. and B, arriving Galita Channel dusk D.3 and following force F through narrows. They would be covered by air reconnaissance to certain extent and destroyers could reach them in emergency in a few Hours.

(vi) Risks run reasonable provided small number of personnel are carried in M.T. ships.

(vii) Plan obviates handicap imposed on Forces F. and B by presence of M.T.ships and inability to conceal object of operations.

(viii) Consider R.N. captains and communication personnel essential in M.T. ships.
(F.O. Force H., 1929/16, to C.in C. Med.)

Your 1215/16. Anticipated rate of oiling is most satisfactory. Programme may not be strictly adhered to e.g. Cruisers will probably be later,VALIANT may arrive any time after 1300. Regret urgency of own programme will not allow destroyers to delay to perform A/S Sweeps. Oiler PLUMLEAF will remain at Malta.
(C.in C. Med. 1355/17 to V.A.Malta.)

MEDITERRANEAN, (Contd.)

My 1932/6. It is intended to send five T class submarines to Mediterranean. Smaller vessels cannot be spared at present. Names and approx. dates of arrival at Gibraltar;

TRIAD, TRUANT.	6th September.
TETRARCH, TRITON.	12th September.
TRIUMPH.	22nd October.

(A.C.N.S. (F) 1709/17).

My 2316/14 and 0255/13 neither to all addressees. Group I consisting of DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, WAIOTIRA and DENBIGHSHIRE escorted by YORK will be known as A.P.one. Group II consisting of SYDNEY STAR escorted by AJAX will be known as A.P. two. (D.O.D.(F) 1914/17)

Turkey. Boom Defences.

Your 1545/8. Request you will confirm that the Turks are prepared to undertake the laying of British Boom Defences in their waters if the equipment is supplied immediately by freight.

1. Boom equipment for Hosphorous is ready but no laying vessels available unless MAGNET can be spared and Turks will accept her in place of one BAR class building for them.

2. Boom equipment for Kilia can be provided but an improved design of defence and modified layout will be forwarded if this project matures. Do Turks want this defence - estimated cost £50,000.

3. Transfer of MAGNET to Turkish control would have to take place at a port outside Dardanelles in view of provisions of Montreux conventions.
(D.B.D. Approved by A.C.N.S.(F) 1050/18).

I had intended to "feint" West and North of Iviza turning to South East after dark D Two and passing between Iviza and Majorca in order (a) to get U/Boats moving in wrong direction (b) to mislead air reconnaissance on D Three.

2. A division to Northwards of Balearic Islands by * of 13th D.F. was also to be synchronized with this move.
* forces apparently omitted.
3. Unless wind is favourable I cannot undertake this feint and pass Galita Island at 1700 zone minus three as in your 1041/10.

MEDITERRANEAN, (Contd.)

4. Would it be accepted to pass Galita Island about 2000 steering towards Naples until it is dark at 2200 when Force F would be detached in approx. position 038° 08'N., 009° 26' E.

5. Distance to R/V would not be appreciably increased and feint towards Naples seems more effective if made from abreast of Galita Island than later.
(F.O. Force H. 1355/18 to C.in C. Med.)

Your 2235/8. As COVENTRY and CALCUTTA have insufficient endurance to reach Gibraltar intend to sail them at 1330 tomorrow Monday to refuel at Greenock and join VALIANT in position 55° 39' N., 07° 00' E., at 0500/21. Fuel not at present available at Belfast.
(C.in C. W.A. 1844/18 to Adty).

Adty's. 2235/8 1611/13 and 1426/15. Route for VALIANT to Gibraltar., C.in C. H.F. is requested to order ships from Scapa to join in position C. COVENTRY and CALCUTTA from Clyde to join in position B at 0500/21. VALIANT is to amend this R/V if required. Route for ships to Freetown from position (D).
HAVELOCK, HURRICANE and HIGHLANDER will provide additional A/S Escort ordered in Admiralty's 1611/13 as far as position (D).
(C.in C. W.A. 2032/18).

Your 1508/13. VALIANT will sail from Liverpool 1330/20/8 and departure of remaining units is being adjusted to conform. Time of arrival however is governed by speed of ROYAL SCOTSMAN which is 16½ knots. Allowing for making good 15 knots time of arrival at Gibraltar is estimated to be early 26/8. If however ROYAL SCOTSMAN were detached to proceed independently with a small escort for the last part of the passage the main force could arrive p.m. 25/8.
(D.O.D.(F) 0016/19 to Force H.)

"HATS"
"BONNET".

Your 1355/18 and 1929/16. Re HATS, intend you should have complete freedom of action provided Force F arrives at appointed rendezvous with Force I punctually. Do not accept that a feint from Galita would be more effective than from vicinity of SKERK-BANK. Re BONNET, the scheme you suggest has previously been considered here and rejected for following reasons. (a) These valuable ships cannot be left unscreened against Submarine attacks.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

"HATS"
"BONNET".
(Contd.)

(b) The presence of screen automatically exposes nationality. (c) Nationality being known they must have (?A/A) protection. No doubt in my mind that this convoy if sailed will have to be fought through and that this can best be done by proceeding in close company with fleet which is particularly strong in A/A protection. Concur that adequate R.N. communications staff would be essential but consider a Lieut. Commander to advise Captain would be sufficient.
(C.in C. Med. to F.O. Force H. 1047/19).

Crete.

Your tel. 688 to F.O. Our most recent information is that troops in Crete are not in fact able to mobilize instantly and that sufficient arms are not even available for troops let alone for local Cretan auxiliaries. Should be glad to know therefore if there has been any change in situation of which we have not received information. For your personal information naval forces would be sent to the assistance of Crete as rapidly as possible but consider it should be strongly impressed on Greek Government that the first essential is most determined, immediate and properly organised resistance in Crete itself without which our naval help cannot develop its full weight.
(C.in C. Med. to Minister, Athens. 1341/19).

Convoy.
A.S.3.

Adty. 1150/17. Intended that DESTRO should be included in convoy A.S. three which will be escorted to Port Said under cover of operation HATS.
(C.in C. Med. 1321/19).

Intend sailing VALIANT, AJAX, ARGUS, FAULKNOR, FORESTER, FORESIGHT, FUTY, HIGHLANDER, HURRICANE, HESPERUS, MTS, DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, WAIOTIRA, ROYAL SCOTSMAN DENBIGHSHIRE, and SYDNEY STAR 1400/21 speed 15½ knots to R/V in position 55 degs. 27' N., 11 degs. 28' W., at 1430/22 with R.A.A. Mediterranean. Routed in accordance with C.in C. Western Approaches 20/32/18.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1753/20).

MOST SECRET.

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MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Your 1047/19. Propose detaching force F in approx. 037° 58'N., 010 °20'E at 2200 after steering towards Naples for (08) hours.

(ii) Assume VALIANT making good 22 knots with paravanes streamed Force F should then make R/V at 0800.

(iii) Feint referred to in para. one of my 1355/18 will now be made South of Balearic Islands.
(S.O. Force H. 2020/20 to C.in C. Med.)

Your 1941/14. Rate of conversion from L.V. to H.V. is dependent on reserves of H.V. ammunition and cannot be further accelerated beyond carefully considered programme.

2. Proportion of H.V. ships in Mediterranean will shortly be increased by arrival of ILLUSTRIOUS, VALIANT, COVENTRY and CALCUTTA.

4. Greatly increased requirements for British and Allied shipping at home which are subject to very frequent dive bombing attacks is one of the reasons for present shortage which however is being overtaken.

5. Mediterranean Fleet will receive every consideration when possible to provide increase in armament.
(D.T.S.D. 1106/21 to C.in C. Med.)

No.1 A. It will be necessary to take a decision not later than 2359/26 as to whether operation MATS or BONNETS is to take place.

B. In order to assist Cs. O.S. in taking this decision request that special reconnaissance may be carried out to try to ascertain whether there are any signs of an imminent attack on Egypt from Lybia. Your deductions from reconnaissance should be available in London not later than 0800/26.
(V.C.N.S. 1931/22 to C's in C. M.E.)

Proposed Operation.

Your 1901/14 part (iii). Yes with exception of night flying by Fulmars but training on passage may make this possible. Each Swordfish will carry 6 250 pound G.P. and 8 25 pound incendiary bombs. Subject to factors unknown to me following remarks are for consideration.

(i) Suggest passing South of Crete and flying off about 35 miles South of Kaso Island will give more sea room for flying operations.

(ii) Forming up of two squadrons at night in present state of training is hazardous. Suggest a different objective be given to each squadron.(S.O.A.C.Med.Fleet 1059/23

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Proposed Operation.

to C.in C. Med.)

95. My 1130/23, not to R.A. Aircraft Carriers Mediterranean and F.O.C.N.A. Unlikely that reinforcements can reach Gibraltar p.m. 28/8 in time to allow fuelling and sailing early a.m. next day which would be necessary for HATS to be carried out according to revised plan.

(2) To avoid whole Force spending two nights in Gibraltar and to enable cruising disposition etc., to be exercised intend arriving Gibraltar dawn 29 and sailing about 0900 zone minus one on 30th August.
(S.O. Force H. 1526/23 to C.in C. Med.)

VALIANT, ILLUSTRIOUS, ARUGS cruisers and convoy reach position 053 degs. 52' North 020 degs. 00' West at 1500/24. ARGUS with convoy proceed Freetown down meridian of 020 degs. West. VALIANT and remainder routed through 038 degs. 50' North 015 degs. 00' North 009 degs. 30' West to Gibraltar.
(F.O.C.N.P. 2345/23 to A.M.C's).

98. Rendezvous with RENOWN, ARK ROYAL ENTERPRISE and destroyers in position (E) 038 degrees 50' North 015 degrees 08' West at 0800 ϕ 27 August.

2. A/A exercise with striking force shadower and fighter patrol will be carried out p.m. 27th and a.m. 28th and cruising disposition exercise on night 27th/28th.

3. Exercise orders and operation orders for HATS will be transferred a.m. 27th.

4. On joining report proposal for R.D.F. organisation:-
(1) With all forces in one cruising disposition.
(2) With aircraft carriers and A/A cruisers operating separately from remainder.

5. If rendezvous cannot be made without undue expenditure of destroyer fuel break W/T silence to report.
(S.O. Force H. 1245/24).

MOST SECRET.

AUGUST, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Following is summary giving intentions for BONNET.

1. D.One Group X consisting of RENOWN, VALIANT, ILLUSTRIOUS, ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD, YORK and destroyers to sail a.m.

2. Group Y consisting of M.T. ships escorted by COVENTRY, CALCUTTA and destroyers to sail at dusk and feint to west until dark.

3. D.2 and night D.2/D 3. Group X makes feint towards Balearic Islands with W/T diversion further north and carries out night bombing of Cagliari Aerodrome as for revised plan of HATS.

4. Group Y proceed along North African Coast.

5. D.3. Group X and Y to rendezvous in vicinity of 037° 50' North 005° 50' East at sunrise Group Y being escorted by fighters from dawn.

6. Then as for HATS except that unless wind is very favourable, speed of carrier, for flying operations will deprive them of full support of anti-aircraft guns of Battle Squadrons.

7. Night D 3/D4. Mining and possibly bombing of Cagliari as for HATS.

8. Separation of groups during D One and D Two enables preliminary bombing to be carried out and may conceal presence of group Y until D 3.
(F.O. Force H. 1514/24 to C.in C. Med.)

C.in C. Middle East has received a directif from Minister of Defence framed in consultation with Chief of Staff which contains reference to Naval Assistance in the shape of reinforcing Army in Western Desert by sea through Mersa Matruh and other projects. C.in C. Middle East has put a number of questions to me asking for a reply in 24 hours. It is difficult to deal with this without having received from Admiralty the directif? mentioned.
(C.in C. Med. 2257/24).

Your 2257/24. Directive follows in my 2130. The reference number is C.O.S.(40) 653, dated 23/8 1940.
(1st S.L. 2034/25).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Haifa Mine Depot.

Adty. 2258/20 and my 1641/24. Haifa most suitably placed for mine depot but it cannot be used until A/A defence is radically improved (see my 1723/17/7 and 1003/25/7). Not considered practicable to establish depot at Alexandria where stowage of large quantities of high explosives is already causing anxiety. Only alternative is to keep mine-carriers in canal area, and I intend to adopt this course. We shall be unable to obtain full value from fast mine-layers until Haifa depot can be used. Consider essential to give very high priority to Haifa anti-aircraft defence so that these minelayers can be employed to full capacity. (C.in C. Med. 1645/24).

Malta, Defences Policy.

243. There appears to me to be a need for defining more definitely the policy concerning Malta.

2. In my view that policy should be to bring base defences at the earliest possible moment to such a state we can operate offensive from island, with all 3 services, secure in the knowledge that defences are efficient to (?reverse) any scale of retaliatory action which enemy may produce.

3. At present various deficiencies notably lack of civilian air-raid shelters, inadequate anti-aircraft defences, and lack of underground protection for certain vital services are such that if we provoke a real heavy scale retaliation the civilian morale would rapidly fall to a point when the population would become a grave menace instead of an assistance to the garrison in resisting attack. Moreover until there is greater protection, Malta is of little use to us as a base and its invaluable docking and repair facilities are lost to us.

4. The service policy on this subject is not co-ordinated is evident from facts that whilst N.O.I.C. Malta holds views expressed above the War Office are at the moment considering sending a force to be based at Malta for offensive raids into enemy territory, whilst R.A.F. are about to send out bomber squadron to work from Malta against Italian targets.

5. N.O.I.C. Malta informs me that deficiency referred to in paragraph three can be remedied and all work completed by spring 1941 if H.M. Government will decide <u>now</u> to supply materials and if energetic and co-ordinated action is taken to see that requirements are shipped with minimum of delay.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Malta Defences Policy.

6. The rendering safe of Malta is key to our Mediterranean strategy and provides the first step in developing our offensive policy. As our grip on Italy and the Mediterranean increases so will (our ?) need of Malta.

7. Details of requirements will be the subject of separate signal but for the moment I submit that our policy should be as follows:- (a) offensive action from Malta should be restricted to attacks on sea targets and to reconnaissance.
(b) We should aim to be ready to make full use of Malta offensively by April 1941.
(c) That by that date: (i) A Force of cruisers and destroyers can be permanently based at island. (ii) It will be reasonably safe to carry out dockings, refits and repairs to H.M. Ships. (iii) A submarine flotilla can be based at island. (iv) sufficient protection and aerodromes available to work bomber and reconnaissance squadrons and 4 squadrons of fighters. (v) Raiding forces of troops can operate based at Malta.

8. It may of course be possible that some requirements can be met before April 1941, but our offensive policy is so far as use of Malta is concerned should be graded to be such that defences of island are sufficient to deal with any retaliatory action likely to be provoked.

9. Are Chiefs of Staff fully satisfied that Malta with its present defences can stand up to a determined effort to capture fortress backed up by the immense scale air attack that can be brought to bear? Personally my doubts on this point cause me (? considerable) concern.
(C.in C. Med. 2015/22).

Your 2015/22. Admiralty fully concur as to necessity for bringing base defences of Malta to such a state that we can operate offensively from the Island. Matter is already under discussion in Chiefs of Staff Committee but delay is of course due to provision of necessary forces and equipment.
(V.C.N.S. 1830/25 to C.in C. Med.)

Egypt.

Adty. 1931/22 crossed C.in C. Middle East P. 16981 of 22/8 which gave an appreciation

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Egypt. (Contd.)

of indications of pending offensive against Egypt and may perhaps have been considered by you to answer Chiefs of Staff telegram. Chiefs of Staff however, expect a further appreciation to reach London by 0800/26. (D.O.D.(F) 1339/25).

281. Your 1339/25. Report already sent to Chiefs of Staff from H.Q. Middle East. Gist of message is that situation does not repetition not justify "BONNETS". (C.in C. Med. 1959/25).

F.A.A. at Western Desert Bases.

Your 1058/24 and 1622/24.
1. Mention of F.A.A. in Press will tell Italians that Fleet Aircraft are operating on all Western Desert Aerodromes since they know from their daily reconnaissances of Alexandria when EAGLE is at sea. I now have 3 Swordfish with torpedoes working from Marten'Baagvsh under R.A.F. operational control for attacking shipping on Libya Coast and particularly want to keep this quiet. Hoped Italians will think R.A.F. who are comparatively very weak in Western Desert have been reinforced with torpedo carrying aircraft. This may well discourage them still further from using Tobruk for off loading stores and equipment and may force them back to Derna and even further. Suggest that publicity in this case should be sacrificed.
(C.in C. Med. 1005/25 to Adty).

Greece.

Foreign Office telegram 553 to Minister Athens 20 and letters 744 to F.O. It appears F.O. have insufficiently stressed the assistance which our sea power can bring to Greece. I do not consider this should be regarded as being limited to attempts to deny Crete to Italy. The Aegean can be regarded now as very largely in our control and our force operating frequently there marking potential Eastern Greek Coast from Dodecanese.

Contend that on west coast we should certainl take up challenge of any attempt to pass forces by sea to Greek ports and can seriousl interfere with trans Adriatic routes by submarine and to a certain extend surface activity. Consider therefore that much more should be made of value of support of our sea power in conversation with Greek Government.
(C.in C.Med. 1129/26 to Adty).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Turkish Defences.

My 1218/21. para.(2). Viceroy not anxious for this special defence for Kilia. Summary of argument in reply in writing as follows:-

(a) Turks consider it better to hasten arrival of British Boom Defence for Dardanelles.

(b) When moorings for above laid in Wassa position then Turkish net, now at Nagara, should be moved through to position given in Part 2 C. in C. Mediterranean Tele: No. 1545 August 8th always provided necessary material can be supplied by British Government to extend Turkish net for this position.

(c) Necessity for making new net for Kilia thus obviated but anti-submarine protection ∅ (corrupt group) for Marmore and Kilia.

3. Propose to arrange that Commander Cameron in conjunction with Turks prepares list of Material required to extend Turkish net.
(N.A. Angora, 1758/26).

Malta as Base for Offensive.

Following for A.O.C. in C. Ref. C.in C. Med. 's T.O.O./22 addressed Admiralty repeated you regarding policy at Malta.

para.1. Chiefs of Staff have considered use of Malta as base for offensive operations following recommendation of Cabinet Committee. Following is summary of their conclusions. "Malta is NOT a suitable base for bomber operations against Italy in present circumstances because most important targets are in North West and are nearer to United Kingdom than to Malta. We are attacking these areas as heavily as possible but even this is a diversion although an important one from our primary object namely the carrying out of a methodical and sustained air offensive against Germany. All long range bombers and all crews equipment etc. which can be spared from United Kingdom are urgently required for Middle East. Malta is valuable staging point for reinforcing aircraft and we do not wish to take action which would precipitate attacks on scale likely to prejudice this. We shall be unable for some time to provide fighter and A.A. defences on scale necessary to give reasonable protection against scale of attack which almost certainly would result from heavy raids based on Malta."

para.2. Chiefs of Staff considered increasing defensive strength of Malta because of its great potential value as naval base and have agreed in principle to increasing A.A. defence up to approved scale of 112 heavy and 60 light A.A. guns by April 1941. Fighter strength will also be augmented up to total

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Malta as Base for Offensive. (Contd.)

of 4 Squadrons as soon as circumstances permit, though this is clearly longer term project. A.O.C. Mediterranean asked to investigate possibility of providing two additional aerodromes.

para.3. We have no intention of stationing a bomber squadron at Malta at this stage. What is intended is to establish a flight of G.R. aircraft there within the next month and this may be the unit the C.in C. Mediterranean refers to.
(Air. Min., 0510/29 to H.Q. R.A.F. M.E.)

Fleet Mine Sweepers.

Need for fast Fleet mine sweepers in the Mediterranean for offensive minesweeping increasingly evident. Italians rely greatly on defensive minelaying, in consequence our activities are hampered. When Fleet reinforced we shall be acting more and more off enemy coast and thus in area where mining threat is great. Except for two-speed destroyer sweep in destroyers, no craft available for sweeping passage for Fleet and with so few destroyers highly undesirable to risk them for this duty. Request providing up to four sweepers for Fleet sweeping. The T.S.M.S. at present here besides being completely occupied with duty in keeping clear approaches to Ports are now only capable of sweeping at nine to ten knots.
(C.in C. Med. 1509/27 to Adty).

Joint Planning.

Rapid expansion of G.H.Q. Middle East and the very large area for which it is now responsible have resulted in personnel being on a different footing to that originally contemplated. Joint planning staff is now responsible for preparing papers which under covering approval of the Commanders in Chief are to be submitted to C.O.S. sub-committee at home. Members of the joint planning committee in Middle East are my Chief of Staff an Air Vice Marshal and a Major General and the joint planning staff consisting of a Brigadier, a Group Captain, and a Commander.

2. Important, observing how little my Chief of Staff can be present in Cairo, that naval opinion should carry full weight, but I consider that an officer with more standing and experience should be appointed to joint planning staff. Middle East naval representation should consist (a) Of a Captain R.N. with Imperial Defence College qualifications (b) a Commander or Lt.Cmdr.R.N passed Staff College.

3. Suggest that Captain should also represent C.in C. East Indies.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Joint Planning. (Contd.)

4. Possible.
(C.in C. Med. 1839/29).

F.A.A. Attacks.

HATS. Intend EAGLE to carry out Fleet Air Arm Attack with bombs on shipping and other objectives in Tripoli at dawn on 2nd September. If movement goes according to plan intend to carry out similar ?attack from both carriers on Rhodes aerodromes at daylight on 4th, September.
(C.in C. Med. 2017/29).

Italy and Greece.

Belgrade telegram 623 and Angora telegram 1090.

While Italy are sedulously suggesting they do not intend matters to extremes with Greece military information as to Italian concentration in Albania clearly shows Italian bluff could be converted into an imposed attack in a few hours. One of Italian motives is doubtless to prevent us Turkey and Yugoslavia from considering their threats as serious and from providing Greece at once with any help we can spare. Strongly urge if we are going to ask Turks to loan equipment to Greeks such action should be taken now and not postponed in hope that Italy are not serious. We risk losing mainland of Greece for sake of a small amount of Fighter Aircraft and armaments. Effect on people if sections of Athens are laid waste from air (an operation against which there is little defence at present) might have serious effect on Greek determination to resist. Even success of fighting on frontier is prejudiced by lack of anti-tank guns. As weather in the mountains will render operation difficult after September it is to be expected that any fighting which shall break out will do so almost immediately.
(Minister, Athens, 1836/30).

Malta Landing Grounds.

Search for additional landing grounds, is proceeding but wish to emphasise that provision further landing grounds need not delay arrival Fighter Squadrons when these become available. Luqa and Takali could each take 2 squadrons until dispersion becomes possible by provision further strip landing area which are most difficult to find and likely to take many months to prepare.
(H.Q. Malta 0930/30 to Air Ministry).

MOST SECRET.

AUGUST, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN, (Contd.)

Malta Defences.

My 1830/25. Chiefs of Staff Committee have agreed that anti-aircraft defences of Malta should be built up to strength of 112 Heavy, 60 Light A.A. guns by April 1941 and if possible Fighter strength to be brought up to four Squadrons. No intention of stationing bomber Squadron at Malta at this stage. Intend to establish a flight of G.R. aircraft there within the next month.

2. Governor and C.in C. Malta, have been informed of details of manning and provision of A.A. guns by War Office. A.O.C. in C. Middle East has been informed of intentions regarding aircraft.
(D. of L.D. 1758/30 to C.in C. Med.)

MOST SECRET.

SEPTEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Reserves for Fulmars.

Admiralty 1154/16/8. Request provision of I R Fulmars for 806 squadron and for 805 squadron as it is formed may be hastened as much as possible. ILLUSTRIOUS and her Fulmars have already done excellent work in combatting Italian Bombers attacks and I can now operate much more freely against Italian Fleet and other objectives, but fleet fighter effort cannot be sustained without adequate reserve aircraft and crews. Important to consolidate moral superiority established by our fighters over Italian Air Force before latter acquire more modern machines and longer range fighters. Also planes have not yet experienced dive bomber attacks and further attacks by T/B must also be expected. If Fulmars cannot be sent quicker than indicated could Skuas or more Gladiators be sent in lieu, the complications entailed to stores being accepted. When reserve A/C and spare gear are despatched from U.K. request they may be sent in fast ships as far as possible.
(C.in C. Med. 2025/3).

Your 1630/3. Generally assumed should Alexandria become untenable the Fleet could not operate in Mediterranean for more than a few weeks. I do not intend lightly to be driven out of Alexandria but my object is to make certain that Fleet may make an orderly withdrawal and work for months if not for ever from Haifa and Port Said. Propose to arrange that bulk stores and ammunition can be moved at short notice and in consultation with C. in C. Middle East and A.O.C. in Chief Middle East I hope to arrange strengthening of Haifa and Port Said defences at short notice. This will have to be at expense of Alexandria. It is not my intention even if the Army is driven back to the Middle Delta to abandon use of Alexandria altogether. It will be used as a fuelling base for advanced force. A difficulty in making the above arrangement is of course need for extreme secrecy so as to avoid alarming Egyptians.
(C.in C. Med. 1101/5).

Admty.1759/4. Following remarks apply to Western Mediterranean.

Consider that factors probably responsible for lack of opposition to HATS apply to proposed operations as follows.

(a) Diversion. By splitting forces and giving M T anti-submarine protection only during D 1 and D 2 presence of M T might be concealed until midday or possibly later D 2. Concentration necessary daylight D 3 and subsequently, intention can no longer be disguised once force is sighted.

(b) Elimination of shadowers. With one R D/F ship and one carrier, doubtful if potential shadowers can be dealt with before they sight. Reliable I FF would greatly assist the search.

(c).:.....

MOST SECRET.

SEPTEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN (Contd:).

(c) Attack by bombers. Likelihood of enemy air attacks developing and achieving success on D 3 would be considerably increased if escort is limited to present Force H.

(d) Neutralising ELMAS. Difficult to assess the effect of bombing on subsequent operations of enemy striking force but consider this factor of some importance.

3. For operation to have reasonable prospect of success consider following necessary.

(a) M T ships should be disguised as warships. Provided ships do not call at Gibraltar and make passage of Straits in dark hours degree of disguise could be limited to grey paint, Tripod masts, dummy turrets. Force to remain concentrated during passage.

(b) Additional 2 DIDO cruisers to escort for extra R D/F and A.A.fire. Escort vessels too slow for subsequent retirement. Substitute H.M.S.BARHAM for H.M.S.RESOLUTION.

(c) Temporary provision of R.A.F. bombers Malta to assist in neutralising Sicily aerodrome to D 3 and D 4.

(d) Additional one S/M to force H to carry out night bombardment of North Sardinia at diversion.

4. Passage of Narrows by day merits consideration. Concerted offensive against enemy aerodromes by carrier borne and shore based bombers during night of D 3/D4 and dawn of D 4 might prove effective. Main objection is double passage of Narrows by escorting force.

5. Do not consider personnel should be embarked in M T ships.
(S.O. Force H. 1245/6).

Reference 1759/4 from Admty. (b) Both (i) and (ii) are practicable but in my opinion undesirable except in case of grave urgency. The operation would necessarily be attended by considerable risk to ships in convoy. For example ILLUSTRIOUS cut a mine with her paravane during the passage through the (? narrows).
(C.in C. Med. 1031/6.)

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Request favourable decisions may now be given on my 1351/23/8 regarding escort ships, on my 1509/27/8 regarding fleet minesweepers and on my 1312/3/9 regarding provision of additional minesweepers and of LL trawlers for Malta. Fully realise how heavy calls must be at home but Mediterranean is very ill equipped in these respects and reinforcement of these types is urgently necessary. For offensive operations essential that fleet bases should be adequately defended by local force, and should not be necessary to divert destroyers to carry out convoy escort work, local patrols etc. which can be done by less important craft. The Mediterranean Destroyer Force is already inadequate and many units are old and require much repair. Additional vessels required are:-

(a) For convoy escorts five.
(b) Fleet minesweepers five.
(c) For Local A/S patrol five.
(d) For local minesweeping T.S.M.S. or trawler type eight, LL trawlers two in addition to the four already promised.

5. (c) and (d) would be allocated as required 36 in all, Malta Canal area and Haifa. The three latter ports are lamentably short of local craft to compete with serious submarine or minelaying while the minesweepers at Haifa which consist of two local tugs are not more than a bluff.
(C.in C. Med. 1917/9).

Request largest scale maps available showing contours and photographs taken from seaward of the Genoa Savona and Alghero areas may be sent to Gibraltar at the earliest opportunity to assist in preparation of bombardment plan.
(F.O.Force H. 1025/11).

My 1917/9 para.three. Following is state of Mediterranean Destroyer Command today. This situation, whilst possibly obmormally gloomy cannot be considered exceptional.
2nd D.F. seven ships. HAVOCK making good bomb damage Suez, ILEX in dock repairing torn rudder IMPERIAL in dock repairing leaky feed tank.

14th D.F. six ships. WRYNECK rearming NUBIAN in (?) service but a bracket bush worn MOHAWK in service but rudder requires lifting

10th D.F. nine ships. STUART out of action requiring urgent extensive refit VOYAGER, refitting at Malta VAMPIRE docking Port Said, to repair a bracket bush DEFENDER making good essential machinery defects, DAINTY, DIAMOND sailing for Red Sea convoy.
This leaves only 12 destroyers for operations of which two NUBIAN and MOHAWK have urgent defects. (C.in C. Med. 2009/15).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Bombardment.

Following operation is intended.
V.A.L.F. with ILLUSTRIOUS and VALIANT leaves Alexandria p.m. today Sunday to rendezvous with 3rd C.S. off Western Crete p.m./16. VALIANT to part company after dark 16th to proceed Eastward while remainder close to 100 miles from Benghazi to deliver moonlight dive bombing and cucumber attacks with Swordfish. Force will than rejoin H.M.S. VALIANT and return to Alexandria early a.m./18. Operation described in my 1209/12 para.2 has been curtailed in consequence. As sson as sufficient destroyers can be got together, probably on 17/9, RAMILLIES will proceed to bombard Sollum village and escarpment in support of Western Desert Force.
(C.in C. Med. 1537/15).

Danube Mining.

Considering possibility of operations for placing magnetic mines in Danube now that it is no longer possible to take action by means of river craft. Appears that value and importance of blocking river is so great that commensurate effort is fully justified. Does not appear feasible to carry out operation from carrier owing to short range of Fleet Air Arm Aircraft. A.O.C.in C. states shortage of aircraft makes it impossible for him to take any action. Is matter receiving consideration by Joint Board in England? Understand a plan of above and also for attack on oil refineries has been forwarded by C.in C. Middle East. Action appears urgent before Germany can organise Roumanian air defences.
(C.in C. Med. 2325/26).

Following operations are intended.

A. Fleet leaves Alexandria a.m./27 for central Mediterranean, GLOUCESTER and LIVERPOOL having embarked approx. 1200 military drafts and a few airmen and R.A.F. stores for Malta. These Cruisers will be detached p.m./28 about 200 miles from Malta to proceed there at high speed, disembark troops and rejoin me p.m./29 to Westward of Crete.

STUART proceeds Malta to refit and MOHAWK for repairs. VOYAGER to rejoin from Malta with cruisers.

Object of operation is to pass these reinforcements to Malta and to engage enemy fleet if favourable opportunity offers. A small Aegean Convoy will sail under cover of this operation.

Expect to return to Alexandria p.m./30.

MOST SECRET.

SEPTEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

B. As soon as ships complete loading probably about 7/10 a 15 knot convoy five or six ships will be sailed for Malta and covered by Fleet. This operation will entail fuelling of destroyers at Malta and opportunity may be taken to carry out F.A.A. attack on Tripoli.

C. With reference to Adty 2345/15 and my 0937/17 information is now requested when this ship may be expected, in order that her passage may be synchronized with B above or some other operation.
(C.in C. Med. 1637/24).

MOST SECRET.

OCTOBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Question of reinforcements of convoy escorts minesweepers and A/S craft for the Mediterranean has been under review. Heavy demand for these classes in Home Waters to deal with trade and troop convoys against large scale air and submarine attack and minelaying renders it most difficult to meet your requirements. Request remarks on following proposals.

Convoy Escorts. COVENTRY and CALCUTTA were intended to allow increased A.A. escort of Aegean convoys but do not assist in the relief of destroyers from A/S escort. Four Corvettes can be sent to you about end of November. Do you consider their passage through the Mediterranean would be practicable?

Fast Fleet Sweepers. No oropesa minesweepers can sweep above 10 knots. Four T.S.D.S. destroyers can be sent about middle of October with projected movement of merchant ship to Malta.

Fleet Minesweepers. None can be spared from home at present. Earliest reinforcement about February 1941 by two BANGORS building in Australia which could relieve two minesweepers now at Aden or themselves proceed to Mediterranean. Further Australian BANGORS could be made available later on completing.

"LL" Minesweepers. Four whalers sailed late September via the Cape to be followed shortly by a further four. It is impracticble to equip these vessels with A/S.
(D.M.S. Approved by 1st Sea Lord. 1232/1 to C.in C. Med.).

Mining Menace.

A.T.1232/1. Consider Corvettes can make passage through Mediterranean provided they accompany BARHAM or, if not possible by then, they should be accompanied through na rows by a ship of Force of not less than a 12-gun cruiser. Whilst welcoming additional four destroyers, have avoided using these valuable ships for minesweeping as far as possible.

Scale of enemy minelaying has not yet been serious; but should it intensify, situation would be serious.

Malta has only T.S.M.S, the only ship there that can be relied on to sweep in winter weather. Fleet might easily be mined out of Malta at a critical moment and thus cut off from its essential fuel supplies in central mediterranean. Would prefer the two BANGORS should proceed Mediterranean.
(C.in C. Med. 1113/4).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Defence of Crete.

Service attaches are authorised to discuss defence of Crete on the lines suggested in Cs. in C. Middle East O/20568 cypher 25/9. You should issue the necessary detailed instructions direct to Naval Attache Athens. Minister, Athens, is being informed by F.O. and similar instructions are being sent to G.O. C.in C. and A.O.C. in C. by War Office and Air Ministry. Owing to danger of leakage of information Naval Attache is to be instructed not to divulge details of the strength disposition or movements of our forces. (1st S.L. 1742/7 to C.in C. Med.)

Danube Mining.

Your 2325/26/9. Only reaches of the Danube suitable for magnetic mining are beyond the range of existing types of aircraft operating from such bases as are at present available. Air Ministry have drawn up plans for the attack of oil on the Danube route where this is within range of aircraft operating from England. Refineries at Regensberg were in fact successfully attacked on night 5/6/9 and it is proposed to continue with this plan so far as resources permit as soon as the threat of invasion has diminished. (Head of M. Approved by A.C.N.S.(F) 1744/7 to C.in C. Med).

My 1845/5. Following is a re-statement of my requirements for the attack on Libyan communications.

2. Surface forces required extra to those already in Mediterranean are four Gloucester Class cruisers and one 8 inch cruiser and four Tribals or similar class destroyers, allow me to keep a raiding force of four cruisers and four destroyers operating from Malta and to work reliefs for them.

3. Reconnaissance aircraft at Malta should consist of the GLEN MARTINS already there and a force of about 10 I. E and 6 I.R. aircraft of good speed and long range. Essential to have longer range torpedo/bombing aircraft than are at present available. Owing to conditions at Malta land aircraft are preferable to flying boats and too great a proportion of the latter is therefore undesirable.

4. As regards protection at Malta it is required to build up to the four fighter squadrons and up to establishment of A/A guns as soon as practicable for reasons given in my 1845/5.

5. At Alexandria four I E and two I R flying boats should suffice. (C.in C. Med. 1155/8).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Admty. 1911/10. This can be done. Admiralty 2240/9 para.E. As I shall have a valuable convoy to escort which cannot be delayed and also reinforcements detailed in Admty 0041/11. All heavy forces will have to be at sea for an operation of this importance and destroyers can ill be spared but providing no further breakdown or casualties occur it will be possible to send two to rendezvous about 003° 00' E.

Consider BARHAM and four M.T. ships have at least eight A/S vessels for passage of The Narrows. Would it be possible to sail the four Corvettes referred to in Admty. 1232/1 thus reinforcing the station at same time.

S.O.Force H 1932/10 para.one. I am most averse to passage of the Narrows being made by day. Convoy should reach longitude Galita at night-fall and be within 70 miles of Malta by dawn.

Fighters of ILLUSTRIOUS and A/A Cruisers would be fully employed in Mediterranean operation. I am content to accept arrangement made by S.O. Force H. for ARGUS.

First week in November appears suitable as there is little moon. In any case delay cannot be accepted.
(C.in C. Med. 1421/14, 2158/14).

Following telegram C.O.S. No.16 from Chiefs of Staff for C.in C. Mediterranean and Middle East. Ability of Crete to resist attack might be increased by introduction of officers into the island unobtrusively and in plain clothes. These officers might advise locally on defence measures, stimulate Greek resistance and ensure early and efficient reporting if attack takes place. If you agree, instruct your Service Attaches in Athens to consult Sir M.Palairet on the Subject. Depending on his views you may take any further action you may think fit.
(1st S.L. 1252/15 to C.in C. Med.)

MOST SECRET.

OCTOBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Reinforcements.

Admiralty 2240/9, 1911/10, 2344/10, your 1421/14 and F.O. Force H. 1932/10
Following are Admiralty proposals:-
A. ARK ROYAL, BERWICK, GLASGOW, DUNCAN, FEARLESS, FOXHOUND, ISIS and transport PASTEUR leave U.K. 28/10 due Gibraltar 2/11.
B. PASTEUR will carry 1400 personnel to be billeted ashore prior to embarkation for Malta in BARHAM and four destroyers accompanying her.
C. PASTEUR to return to U.K. as early as possible being required for further transport duties.
D. ARGUS, STIRLING CASTLE (20 knots) with 1570 tank personnel and 4. 16 knot M.T. Ships sail with W.S.4.a on 1/11 - Ocean Escort CORNWALL.
E. M.T. Ships all painted grey and fitted with bow protection gear are:-
(i) CLAN FORBES disguised as depot ship, loaded as in Admiralty 2345/15/9 less U.B. projectors plus field battery and stores for Malta.
(ii) CLAN FRAZER carrying additional A.A. reinforcements mentioned in Adty. 1911/10.
(iii))CLAN CHATTAN, CLAN LAMONT with tanks
(iv))for M.E.
F. On assumption you would wish M.T. Ships to pass Straits in darkness, following are Adty. proposals for next move.
G. Noon 5/11 (day one) an A.M.C. from Western Patrol and SHEFFIELD will meet W.S.4 a in position 46° 30' N. 25° 00' W.
H. A.M.C. escorts ARGUS and such M.T. ships as are to take part in the operation as far as Gibraltar, arriving Straits night of 8th/9th/11 (day 4/5) ARGUS to Gibraltar to fuel.
I. If full operation takes place SHEFFIELD and STIRLING CASTLE proceed at 20 knots from R/V direct to Gibraltar arriving a.m. day four. Personnel transfer to BERWICK, GLASGOW and any destroyers (other than those in paragraph B) at Gibraltar who may be proceeding to Malta. The personnel in any such destroyers being transferred to BARHAM at Malta.
J. If reinforcements are <u>not</u> being passed through to Alexandria SHEFFIELD can return to Gibraltar from R/V independently.
K. A/S escort for H and I to be provided by Gibraltar, A.M.C. returning to Patrol when A/S escort takes over.
L. Number of troops to be embarked in warships is large. The urgency of these reinforcements is such that the consequent difficulties must be accepted.
M. Request your remarks in conjunction with F.O. Force H on these proposals.
(V.C.N.S. 0205/18 to C.in C., Med.).

MOST SECRET.

OCTOBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Turkish Situation.

Following from Admiral Kelly begins. Minister for Foreign Affairs came out (? as I) went in for hour's talk with Marshal Chammak just returned from inspection of Thrace. I understand he was completely satisfied with preparations against any invader. The favourable season also is passed.

Turkish Govt. is unperturbed by Roumanian move, likewise Turkish Embassy in Berlin. They believe it part of encirclement of Russia. German concentration in North Norway threatens Murmansk and Arkangel, Japanese Siberia, and Black Sea Ports in German hands. Russians are hesitating and will not move unless opportunity favourable for them. Russians are frightened by Polish and French examples and their Finnish experience. Russian plan collapsed on (2 corrupt groups) war of attrition followed by world communism.

Turkish Govt. are prepared for attack both political and military and will stand firm against both. The Turks hold by their treaty with Greece they will fight if Bulgaria attacks Greece but not if Italy attacks. Greeks refused to include Italy in treaty. Turks will not fight even if German troops attack Greece through Bulgaria. The despatch of Turkish divisions to aid Greece would weaken them and lay them open to attack and easy defeat.

Italians (? dislike) prospect of attack from Libya but German support ?against Turkey would be slow and difficult. Marshal referred to lack of road and rail communications and volunteered that all railways and roads would be destroyed in the event of German successful advance. In the last war Germans with Russians, working from home base in Palestine, could not employ more than two divisions in attack on Egypt.

Marshal does not exlude possibility of Russian help to Germany in exchange for freedom of Straits. In 1916 when allied with Turkey Germany offered to Russia the Straits for a separate peace.

Turks have two army corps on Syrian Frontier including cavalry division if Italians give trouble there. Italian efforts to raise Syrian natives unsuccessful. Consider it changes (? picture) for Italians.

Air attack on Port Hill heard and seen from Budrum and clouds of smoke from fires.

In last war Germans occupied territory greatly superior to present and they laid down their arms. If Turkey and Greece hold out they will do same again.

9. Marshall tells his army if rich and prosperous country like England hold out against air attacks surely poor country like ✓ can run same risks. Turks lost 50,000 in earthquake

Turkish Situation. (Contd.)

last year and are willing to lose twenty times that for freedom of their country.
(N.A. Angora 1700/16) ✓ group omitted.

Assistance for Turkey.

Following from Admiral Kelly. My telegram 1300/18 and paragraph 6 Ambassador's telegram 1329 to F.O. I foresee Turks intend this discussion to be confined to questions of help they may expect from us. Following is my interpretation.

2. Naval assistance to an ally does not consist in sending given number of vessels to lie in or even work from ports of that ally. It is given by maintaining command of sea and may be exercised from a distance. We are prepared to accept responsibility for Aegean Sea except for local defence of Turkish ports thus leaving whole Turkish naval forces free for Black Sea. Turkish submarines in Black Sea not regidly bound by restrictions of submarine protocol to work principally against supply ships and transports in attack.

3. Turks will ask for ten destroyers to assist in Black Sea as protection against attacks by hypothetical submarines from Germany on their sea transport along north coast of Asia Minor which must be kept open as long as possible including transport of troops from Caucasus to Thrace. Propose saying naval reinforcements would be available in Mediterranean during winter but how and when they would arrive unforeseeable. If assistance required in Black Sea not yet self-evident as plans for Russian neutrality it would be sent as naval situation permitted.

4. Turks have three lines of defence in Thrace before final European stand at Chatalja and Bulair lines and after will hold Asiatic shore. They can count on full British naval assistance to prevent enemy passage of Marmora and Straits.

5. Naval assistance will be available for any combined operations agreed on either in Syria or Dodecanese. Turkish contribution to be opening of all Turkish ports to British ships and protection in their defended ports. All possible steps for embodiment of mobile defence to be hurried on. Such obstructions or mine fields which cannot be placed before emergency period to be ready at shortest notice. Intructions for entry into defended Turkish ports to be in hands of Naval Attache well in advance.

6. Turks consider Dodecanese operations will become easier owing to restrictions of blockade.

7. Two things they will press for are naval and air assistance and they do not understand what the first is.
(N.A. Angora, 1700/18).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Assistance for Turkey (Contd.)

Following from Admiral Kelly ref. tel. 1329 to F.O. from Ambassador Angora, I visited General Asim Gunduz to discuss points raised and informed him I was ready to deal with Naval question at any time.

2. General staff's attitude at present situation.

3. Russian relations with Turkey particularly good but except for material assistance Russia will remain neutral even if Turkey is attacked.

4. If they are in war Turks consider communication with desert very indispensable to ensure corridor to Red Sea and Persian Gulf as well as Egypt.

5. They do not anticipate immediate aggression against Greece existing Turkish Armies in Thrace on Flank an advance from North causing hesitation and possible action against Turkey.

6. General promised great discretion over information given Turkey mission.
(N.A. Angora 1300/18).

Assistance to Greece and Turkey.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No.19. Considering what we can do to strengthen Greek and Turkish will and ability to resist Axis pressure.

2. Greece. We realise importance of preventing Crete falling into enemy hands, but there can be no question of moving troops into the island until Greece enters the war. In light of reinforcements being sent to you in near future report whether and, if so, when you could prepare a small force for Crete to strengthen local forces or to help them resist Italian attack if already started.

3. Turkey. Turkish requirements take the form of complete British air, anti-aircraft and anti-tank units, in addition to material already being supplied under Treaty programme. If assistance were required by Turks now it is obvious that it could only be provided from resources in Middle Ease since there would be no time to send anything from U.K. Will you consider and report scale and nature of any support you could provide in this eventuality. If assistance were not required until next spring it might be possible to send help from outside Middle East, but probably even then only at your expense. Your conclusions on possibility of immediate aid should guide Major General Smith during his discussions at Ankara and he should endeavour to ascertain in detail what Turks wouldwant next Spring if threat did not materialise before then.
(1st S.L. 1724/23 to C.in C. Med.)

Mediterranean Volume, (Contd.)

Reinforcements.

Assuming Operating UNIFORM is cancelled and WHITE COLLAR comprising two M.T.ships is deferred so that ships leave Gibraltar on 20/11 it would apparantly be your intention to put a convoy into Malta early in November in accordance with your 1421/14.

(b) If (a) is correct would it then be possible owing to less congestion at Malta for BARHAM to transport personnel to Malta.

(c) If you can accept (b) we should like to use both BERWICK and GLASGOW for escorting convoys round the Cape in which case BERWICK would arrive Suez on 12/12 and GLASGOW on 20/12.

(d) In any case in order to expedite arrival of M.T. Ships with tanks it will probably be necessary to use either BERWICK or GLASGOW for escort round the Cape. Which would you suggest for this duty?

(e) Request early reply.
(1st S.L. 1849/23 to C.in C. Med.)

Operation White Collar, Proposals.

In view of cancellation of Operation UNIFORM cancel Adty. 0205/18. Following are proposals for Operation WHITE COLLAR -

(a) ARK ROYAL, GLASGOW, DUNCAN, FEARLESS, FOX-HOUND, ISIS and transport PASTEUR leave U.K. 30/10 due Gibraltar 4/11.

(b) PASTEUR will carry about 2100 personnel for Malta to be billeted ashore prior to embarkation in BARHAM, GLASGOW and destroyers as arranged by you.

(c) Realised that number of troops to be embarked in warships is large but urgency of these reinforcements is such that difficulties must be accepted.

(d) M.T.ships, painted grey and fitted with bow protection gear, speed 16 knots are:-

1. CLAN FORBES disguised as a depot. ship, with field battery and stores for Malta.

2. CLAN FRAZER carrying additional A.A. reinforcements.

(e) Each M.T.ship carries 6 Bren guns with their crews.
F.G.H.I. Proposals for route, escort, etc.
(1st S.L. to C.in C. Med. 1736/28).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Malta Reinforcement.

A. Desired to reinforce Malta by at least two and probably three battalions.

B. Decided that first battalion shall come from Middle East. Assumed this will be transported at same time as Malta convoy referred to in para.1 of your 1515/24. Request date on which this convoy will leave Alexandria.

C. W.O. do not wish to further weaken Middle East in near future. Therefore desirable to transport a battalion of reduced strength to Malta in GLASGOW during operation WHITE COLLAR. This would necessitate both BARHAM and GLASGOW entering Malta. Can you accept this.
(1st S.L. 1838/26 to C.in C. Med.)

Admty. 1838/26.

(b) about 1st November.
(c) yes, this can be accepted.
(C.in C. Med. 2205/26).

Assistance to Greece.

Admty. 1648/28. Have considered stationing an A/A cruiser at Piraeus but have been obliged to discard it as both are required elsewhere.

Naval assistance to Greece can really only be given by exerting pressure by Fleet and for this purpose I intend to operate off West Coast as long as possible. Such operations can only be intermittent owing to necessity of resting destroyers whose condition is giving me considerable anxiety. Hope now to be able to extend time off West Coast by using Suda Bay for refuelling, but while operating there shipping movements in Eastern Mediterranean and Malta convoys must be in abeyance, a state of affairs which cannot continue. However while Fleet is in Central Mediterranean, Italians will be precluded from attempting any landing on mainland and on Greek islands as far north as Cephalonia.
(C.in C. Med., 2159/28).

Air Action Against Italy.

Owing to critical situation resulting from invasion of Greece by Italy it has been decided immediately to undertake retaliatory bombing of Rome and Naples from Malta. Aircraft and crews for this are to be found from your Command as follows:-

Following outline of Operations proposed:-

Targets provisionally selected for attack:
(Air Ministry 2140/28).

MOST SECRET.

OCTOBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

It has been decided that attacks on objectives in Rome shall not be carried out until specific orders are received from Air Ministry. Initial attacks will therefore be confined to targets in Naples. If no authority for attacks on Rome is received in the meantine, subsequent attacks may be made at discretion of A.O.C. Malta on Naval bases at Taranto and Brindisi and in Sicily but main focus of operations is to be Naples and may include Naval base there if considered profitable.

It is now the intention to make these operations by reinforcing aircraft a regular feature whenever opportunity occurs during the next two or three months so long as operational and maintenance factors permit. 200 long heavy bomber sorties may be flown during the next three months. (Air Ministry 1710/29).

Your 1700/18. Following for Admiral Kelly.

A. Concur generally in line you propose to take.

B. Your para.2 . Most important that Turks should give their submarine a free hand in the Straits.

C. Your para.3. Undesirable to enter into definite commitment to send specific numbers. Subject to concurrence of Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean, you may give general assurance that we shall provide A/S protection if at all possible but not necessarily with destroyers, and if resence of German submarine proves it necessary.

D. Your para.4. Concur. All possible naval assistance will be given to prevent enemy passage of Marmora and Straits. The term "full naval assistance" should not be used as Turks may think this means whole main Fleet.

E. Your para.5. Presume Turkish ports will be available in all circumstances and not only for combined operations. Use of Turkish port e.g. Smyrna as advanced base for operation in Sea of Marmora to prevent passage of Straits is essential.
(1st S.L. 2220/30 to N.A. Angora).

Mediterranean Volume, (Contd.)

Reinforcements.

Ref: 0315/29 from Admiralty.(BARHAM, BERWICK, GLASGOW and 3 destroyers reinforcing Med. Fleet) My proposals are as follows:-

(a) Allowing for weather conditions and operating aircraft it is unlikely speed of advance can exceed 15 knots.

(b) Allowing for 15 hours making good 21 knots for passage of reinforcements through Narrows and making good 15 knots for remainder of passage to Alexandria BARHAM will have about 30% fuel remaining on arrival.

(c) As we have made diversion on previous occasions I consider a more or less straight run should be tried this time especially if the weather conditions are unfavourable for fleet torpedo flights or bomber aircraft.

(d) If reinforcements arrive off Galita at dusk this will allow Force H to leave Gibraltar under cover of darkness.

(e) Cagliari not to be attacked on eastward passage unless it is apparent weather conditions are favourable and that our presence has been detected.

(f) No destroyers to be sent from Med. Fleet. Three Force H. destroyers to supplement three destroyers detailed for reinforcements make six for passage of Narrows.
(S.O. Force H. 1201/29 to C.in C. Med.)

Troops for Crete.

Your 1201/28 and 2159/28. Always been estimated that a brigade should go to Crete and C.in C. Middle East has been authorised to send up to a brigade to Crete and in addition artillery and A.A. guns. As you can be in the Central Med., intermittently it is desirable that the defence of Crete should be such that any invasion can be resisted until the Fleet can get back from the Eastern Mediterranean. Hence C.in C. M.E. is being asked to send the forces mentioned in para. 1 as soon as possible.

4. Suggest you concert with him regarding the early arrival of the forces in Crete. BERWICK will take an additional 12 Bofors guns to Crete.
(1st S.L. 1642/29 to C.in C. Med.)

MOST SECRET.

OCTOBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

OPERATION "HURRY".

Your 2133/29 and reference delay in sailing of ARK ROYAL, reported by N.O.I.C. Greenock. If ARGUS can arrive Gibraltar within about 24 hours of arrival reinforcements operation HURRY could be carried out in conjunction with passage of reinforcements as proposed in paragraph 3 of my 1931/10, with consequent elimination of delay and economy of effort. (S.O. Force H. 1950/30 to Adty).

MOST SECRET.

NOVEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

MALAYA.
Retubing.

Your 1457/20. With possibility of the Italians having six capital ships available in near future necessary that we should have five ships available. This means that MALAYA should be absent from the fleet for as short a time as possible. Hence MALAYA should be re-tubed at Suez if you are satisfied. (i) As regards her protection from air attack. (ii) That the making good of essential defects apart from re-tubing can be carried out. (Dates for arrival of tubes).
(1st S.L. 0047/1 to C.in C. Med.)

Big Greek convoy carrying 10,000 men and 4000 mules leaves Piraeus evening 4/11 for Salonica via Euboean Channel arranging that open sea passages are done at night. Four T.B.Ds will escort also few aircraft. Two aircraft will be making necessary reconnaissance. Greek Adty. have asked whether cruiser can provide cover against possible attack from Dodecanese.
(N.A. Athens 1125/1 to C.in C. Med.)

President of Council has received your 1531/30/10.

Whilst Italians are advancing down western Epirus the Greek plan is to concentrate on Italian's left flank and attack there. This attack cannot take place for ten to fourteen days. All interruption of Italian communications during this extremely critical and momentous period is of supreme importance. One immediate aid he was hoping for was harrying of Italian communications by British bombing. Meanwhile he wishes three Greek submarines to (? attack) Italian communications as early as possible. Request early action on my 1644 Oct. 31st.
(N.A.Athens 1400/1 to C.in C. Med.)

At a meeting with H.M. the King and President of the Council situation was discussion in view of six Italian Warships at Santi Quaranta. There is a report of an Italian landing on Corfu but this is not believed though Corfu was certainly heavily bombed (? this afternoon). Greek submarines are moving up now to the vicinity of Arta and Santi Quaranta. Could you detach some light force to make a sweep before you leave this area.
(N.A.Athens 1925/1 to C.in C. Med.)

(a) FORMIDABLE has just commissioned and it is proposed to send her round the Cape to replace EAGLE.
She would do her working up on passage. Request your remarks.

(b) Would EAGLE require a refit before being used on the trade routes. (1st S.L. 1955/1).

MEDITERRANEAN. (Contd.)

Aircraft, minelaying.

Service Attache's 2106/4. From experience in Home Waters Durazzo appears ideal for magnetic minelaying by aircraft. 36 A Mark I mines now at Aden may be regarded as reserves for Mediterranean. Further supplies of these mines for Mediterranean and East Indies Stations are being shipped.
(D. of P. 1352/5 to C.in C. Med.)

Choice of plan for operation WHITE.

(a) 12 Hurricanes in ARGUS.

(b) 12 Hurricanes in ARK ROYAL who would be unable to operate aircraft during Eastward approach.

(c) 9 Hurricanes in ARK ROYAL who could operate limited reconnaissance and A/S patrol but not fighter.

2. With (b) and (c) ARK ROYAL's gunfire must be limited to after group.

3. From operational point of view (c) offers decided advantage enabling high speed approach and retirement. If (c) is unacceptable (b) has advantage over (a).
(S.O. Force H. 0901/7 to Adty).

Assistance for Greece.

Following telegram No. 23 from C.O.S. to C.in C. Med, C.in C. M.E., and A.O.C. in C. M.E., decided to give Greece greatest possible material and moral support at earliest possible moment. Impossible for anything from U.K. to arrive in time. Consequently only course is to draw upon resources in Egypt and to replace them from U.K. as quickly as possible. Following plan submitted by C.O.S. and approved by Prime Minister. Details of Aerodromes, aircraft, and A.A. guns. (3,4).

5. In addition to air operations from Greece it is intended to increase weight of attack from Malta by bringing the number of Wellingtons operating temporarily from that place to twenty-four. The passing of Wellingtons to Egypt after operating from Malta will continue as fast as weather permits transit from U.K. About 200 personnel, stores, and bombs will be despatched to Malta by cruiser arriving there on 17/11.

6. Fully appreciated that this plan will leave Egypt very thin for a period. Every endeavour is being made to make this period as short as possible.
(1st S.L. 1918/4 to C.in C. Med.)

Repeat Operation "HATS".

Please consider following possibilities for repeat operation HATS starting 7/11. (a) T.S.R. attack Cagliari Aerodrome at dawn D.3. including some delay action bombs to extend effect throughout day. (b) In event of clouds making interception of shadowers and bombers over fleet problematical when passing Sardinia daylight D.3. to use skuas periodical bombing to Cagliari Aerodrome.
(S.O.Force H, 1225/4, to ARK ROYAL).

5. 5/11 p.m. AJAX and SYDNEY leave Port Said with Bofors batteries to arrive Suda Bay p.m./6.

6. 6/11 a.m. Fleet sails to cover operation and meet Force F.

7. V.A.L.F. in ORION sails for Piraeus with R.A.F. personnel and stores and to contact Greek authorities.

8. R/V with Force F. a.m./10. Force F. disembarks troops. Destroyers fuel Malta.

Mediterranean Volume, (Contd.)

9. Convoy M.E.3. leaves Malta 1600/10 escorted by RAMILLIES to arrive Alexandria 13/11. 1353/4

10. TERROR leaves Malta 1200/10 to arrive Suda Bay 1800/12 as guardship temporarily.

11. Slow convoy leaves Piraeus 10/11 with Chrome ships and empty Greek tankers for Alexandria.

12. Fleet leaves Malta p.m./10 on completion of fuelling, for offensive operations in Ionian Sea.
(C.in C. Med., 1357/4).

Following are my intentions for operation M.B.8 which includes operation COAT.

2. 4/11. Slow convoy leaves Port Said and Alexandria taking fuel and petrol to Suda Bay an R.A.F. stores, petrol and bombs, coal and other essential stores, for Greeks to Piraeus.

3. 5/11. Fast convoy leaves Port Said and Alexandria for Suda Bay and Malta taking guns, troops and fuel to Suda Bay.

4. Both convoys to pass Kaso night 6/7th.

Operation "COAT".

Request you will sail for operation COAT as requisite detaching Force F off Galita Island at dusk 9/11 to R/V with me at 090°/10. Med. Fleet will pass through position 270° Gozo Light 40 miles steering 300° at this time.

2. V.A. Malta is requested to signal route recommended passing North of Skerki Bank.

3. BARHAM, BERWICK, GLASGOW, GRIFFIN, GREYHOUND and GALLANT will be detached to Malta to disembark troops and fuel. BERWICK will not fuel in Malta.

4. Remaining three destroyers of Force F. will be retained in company with Fleet until all Mediterranean Destroyers have fuelled.

5. Operation orders will be given to Force F. on arrival at Malta.

6. Do you intend HOTSPUR to proceed with Force F for this operation.
(C.in C. Med. 1335/4 to S.O.Force H.)

Air Reinforcements M.E.

A. In order to replace from the U.K. air support now being sent from Middle East to Greece, the following three Operations are necessary:-

1. NEWCASTLE to leave Plymouth on 9/11 with R.A.F. personnel and stores for Malta. This cruiser to join S.O. Force 'H' at Gibraltar and to pass through to Malta concurrently with the movement for White. The full moon period being accepted. NEWCASTLE will return to U.K.

2. MANCHESTER and SOUTHAMPTON (carrying 1370 R.A.F. Personnel from Gibraltar) and M.T. ship NEW ZEALAND STAR fitted with bow protection gear with R.A.F. Stores to sail from U.K. between 12/11 and 14/11 for Alexandria in order to be passed through concurrently with Collar. The R.A.F. personnel ship to sail from U.K. for Gibraltar at the same time. MANCHESTER will return to U.K., but SOUTHAMPTON may be required to remain in Mediterranean temporarily.

3. FURIOUS escorted by one of 10th C.S. to leave U.K. on 14/11 having embarked 34 Hurricanes to be flown off at Takoradi for onward flight to the Middle East.

C. F.O.Force 'H' is requested to take charge of the Operation referred to in Para. (a) 1. (A.C.N.S. (F) 0218/5).

Operation COLLAR.

Adty. 1736/28 and 0218/5. Following are Admiralty proposals:-

A. On parting from A/S escort, MANCHESTER, SOUTHAMPTON, FRANCONIA, CLAN FORBES, CLAN FRAZER and NEW ZEALAND STAR (all 16 knots ships) are to proceed at best speed to a R/V position in 41 degrees North 21 degrees West.

B. On arrival at R/V.

1. MANCHESTER and FRANCONIA proceed at best speed to Gibraltar.

2. SOUTHAMPTON, CLAN FORBES, CLAN FRAZER and NEW ZEALAND STAR remain near R/V until joined by SHEFFIELD at 0900 G.M.T. on 21st November.

C. On being joined by SHEFFIELD, SOUTHAMPTON is to proceed at best speed to Gibraltar, SHEFFIELD escorting M.T. ships to Gibraltar as ordered by F.O.Force H.

D. MANCHESTER and SOUTHAMPTON on arrival at Gibraltar are to embark 1370 R.A.F. personnel for Alexandria ex FRANCONIA.

Operation COLLAR. (Contd.)

E. NEWCASTLE to return to Gibraltar under cover of this operation.

F. Requirements in S.O. Force (H) 1730/22/10 have been met in all three M.T.ships except that no men of P.Os. rate are available.
G. An R.N. executive officer is embarked in each M.T. ship for liaison duties.

H. Request early remarks on these proposals together with any special instructions for MANCHESTER and SOUTHAMPTON on passage to Gibraltar.

I. Mails for Gibraltar will be in FRANCONIA, for Malta in CLAN FORBES and for Alexandria in NEW ZEALAND STAR.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1633/8 to C.in C. Med. F.O.Force H)

Greek - Italian Operations.

(a) On Epirus front Greek troops have received orders to retire to a line running from Ambalia to Marshes of River Acheron then West to coast. Northward Ambalia the line is holding.

(b) Latest details will be signalled about mid-day November, 9th including Italian concentrations and sea movements. Arrangements for indicating to seaward the position of the extreme Greek flankare being considered.

Greek Submarines near Straits of Otranto have been ordered to keep at least 15 miles North of Bari and Durazzo line from 1800/11 till 0800/12.

(d) Greek Submarines off West coast of Greece have also been ordered to keep south of 38° 30' from 0800/11 till 1800/12.
(N.A.Athens, 1229/8).

Possibility of enemy advance through Balkans and Syria to M.E.

Following from C.O.S. No.26 to C.in C. Med., and M.E.
Begins:- Following is summary of appreciation of possibility of enemy advance through the Balkans and Syria to the M.E.

2. German move into Roumania appears to have achieved following objectives.:-

(a) German interests in Roumania, particularly oil supplies and communications, have been secured.

Possibility of enemy advance through Balkans and Syria to M.E. (Contd.)

(b) Any possible Russian move towards straits has been forestalled.

(c) Germany is in good position for further advance.

Further German moves, for which sufficient forces are available, appear likely.

3. If Germany decided to embark on a drive against the Balkans and Anatolia in the early future, the following might be the plan of action.

Phase 1.
Occupation of Bulgaria, occupation or isolation of Yugoslavia, and assistance to Italy in campaign against Greeks.

If this phase should be accomplished by the Axis Powers, our naval position in the Eastern Mediterranean would be weakened, but this would be offset by our establishment of an advanced naval base at Crete. We hope to hold this advanced base whatever happens on the mainland of Greece, but if Greece were over-run our use of Crete would be limited by the scale of air attack which might be brought to bear on it from Greek aerodromes. (It is possible that Germany may at this stage restrict her action in South East Europe to the consolidation of Phase 1 and the launching of a diplomatic offensive against Turkey. Should, however, Germany decide on further military action, the succeeding phases of the plan might be as follows).

Phase 11.
German advance into Turkish Thrace and establishment of bridgeheads on the eastern side of the Straits.

Provided Turkey could maintain her position on the Asiatic shores of the Straits, the enemy would gain no great economic or strategic advantage.

Phase 111.
Advance into Anatolia, Syria, and possibly Northern Iraq, to be carried out in 1941. Subsequent plan might be to advance either southwards into Palestine or eastwards into Iraq.

Enemy penetration into Anatolia would not vitally affect our blockade unless they were eventually in a position to draw large supplies of oil from Iraq.

Possibility of enemy advance through Balkans and Syria to M.E. (Contd.)

The penetration of Syria would, however, threaten our alternative line of communication to Egypt via Iraq and Palestine, and our oil supplies from Iraq and Iran might be attacked from the air.

An increased scale of enemy air attack from Anatolia Syria or Palestine might affect the security of our fleet base at Alexandria, and might eventually oblige our forces in Egypt to fight on two fronts.

Effective Turkish resistance is, therefore, of the highest importance to us.

4. The War Cabinet have authorised the following action:-

A. Turkey.

(i) Preparation of plans for giving assistance to Turkey. This is proceeding here.

(ii) Examination of methods of increasing supplies of armaments to Turkey. This is being correlated with supplies to Greece.

(iii) Formation of mission to Turkey. Service Departments are telegraphing separately.

(iv) Preparations of plans for demolition of Turkish communications. This will be communicated to you under (iii) above.

B. Syria.

The following measures are being examined here:

(i) Economic and financial pressure show that Syria is dependent on our goodwill.

(ii) No obstacles to be placed in the way of removal to France of discontented and Anglophobe reservists.

(iii) Refusal of permission for transfer of French North African troops.

(iv) Assistance and encouragement to the anti-Vichy faction in Syria.

(v) Concerted plans with the Turks to include plans for occupation of Syria, see para.4A., (iii) above.

C. Denial of Oil to enemy.

Perrecting of plans for destruction of Iraq Oil Wells and pipe lines in Iraq, Syria and Palestine.

D. Iraq.

(i) Removal of Prime Minister.

/(ii)

Possibility of enemy advance through Balkans and Syria to M.E. (Contd.)

(ii) Elimination of the Mufti.

(iii) Financial and economic aid.

(iv) Special deplomatic mission to go to Baghdad.

(v) Steps to open up the desert route. This forms subject of separate communication to C.in C, M.E.

5. It is of great importance that Russia should not align herself against us in the Near or M.E. though our policy in this respect must remain uniform with that of U.S.A. We hope to impress Russia with our growing air strength during the course of present interchange of visits by Air Attaches. Ends.
(1st S.L. 1624/13 to C.in C. Med., C.in C.E.I.)

Possibility of passing fast personnel ships through Med.

Owing to the shipping situation and the heavy reinforcements for the Middle East in the early part of 1941 it may be necessary to run fast personnel ships through the Mediterranean. First convoy would probably not leave U.K. until January and might consist of as many as twelve ships. Risk to personnel would be accepted but must be minimised as far as possible by:
(1) Adequate escorts. (2) As good air protection as possible. (3) Special arming of the personnel ships. (4) Arrangements to deal with damaged ships. Request you will, in consultation with S.O.Force H inform Admiralty of your general plan for such an operation and in addition state what you consider necessary as regards - (1) Temporary reinforcements of surface ships. (2) Air reinforcements.
(3) Special armament or fittings in the personnel ships. To make any real saving in shipping it would be necessary to bring the ships back through the Mediterranean when empty. It is realised that you will no doubt wish to wait for the experience we gain in operation COLLAR before replying.
(1st S.L. 2324/14 to C.in C. Med.)

Dodecanese Islands Plans.

Crete can now be used as a jumping off ground for attacks on Dodecanese Islands. I am hoping to obtain the Services of a bomber command formation from Middle East but force proposed in Admiralty tele. 1750/6/8 and 1317/10/8 would be of great assistance and could be transferred in due course to Malta if found desirable. When is it anticipated fast landing craft could be available. Operations against Dodecanese Islands are likely to be necessary on a progressively larger scale and I could find good employment for a brigade

Dodecanese Islands. Plans. (Contd.)

of Royal Marines should such a force be available.
(C.in C. Med, 1429/16 to Adty).

Greek troop convoys from Crete.

Your 1745/14. First convoy of exit of troops from Crete will now be embarked at Suda Bay only commencing a.m./17.

(b) Convoy will consist of nine transports escorted by nine destroyers sailing not later than 1800/17.

(c) Further convoys are due to leave but dates are not yet known.

(d) It is desirable to use CANDIA for some of these convoys but only if defence against air attack can be provided.
(N.A.Athens 1715/15 to C.in C. Med.)

Operation COLLAR.

Adty. 1633/8 is to be amended as follows:- para.A. Amend R/V position to read 39° N., 19° W. para. B.(1) MANCHESTER and FRANCONIA are to proceed at best speed to Gibraltar on reaching the latitude of 41° N., para.B.(2) Amend time of R/V to 1500 G.M.T/21.
(D.O.D.(F) 1055/16).

RAMILLIES.

Your 1643/14. Admty.have now requested RAMILLIES be passed through from East to West during operation COLLAR. Following are my broad intentions.
D.1. day to be 22/11.
D.1.(a) RAMILLIES sail with M.W.4 convoy routed North of Crete.
(b) 2nd divn., 1st B.S. sail for Suda Bay to fuel and then to cover convoy to Malta.
D.2. 1st D. 1st B.S. sail for Suda Bay to fuel destroyers, thence to meet force F a.m. D.6.
(Thereafter see C.in C. Med. 1619/21)
5. Will corvettes endurance allow them to proceed nonstop to Alexandria and can they be expected to maintain speed of M.T. ships in normal weather conditions.
(C.in C. Med. 1207/17 to S.O.Force H.)

Mediterranean Volume, (Contd.)

Dodecanese Islands.

It would appear that we shall shortly be able to attack Dodecanese Islands and possibly seize them (?) piece meal. A serious difficulty will occur concerning attitude to be taken up over Greek and Turkish claims. It is evident from F.O. tel. No. 1128 to Ambassador Cairo and Minister Athens telegram 929 to F.O. that matter is already under consideration but I feel a decision on policy in this matter is one of urgency if we are not to find ourselves unable to proceed while question of attitude of H.M. Govt. remains unsettled. A complication may also be that a convenient way of garrisoning islands might be to use Greek volunteer units and unless position has been made clear before action would evidently not be possible.
(C.in C. Med. 2008/17 to Adty).

Plans for R.A.F. Operations.

(a) Augusta Syracuse and Cantania harbours are unprofitable targets. So are aerodromes with widely dispersed aircraft. Consider the choices therefore are

(i) Cucumber laying Tripoli (Africa) followed by night bombing.

(ii) Night bombing Messina harbour and ships.

(iii) Night bombing Palermo harbour and ships.

(b) I have arranged with the air officer Commanding to start working up the squadron(s) for the Tripoli (Africa) operation and out intention is to carry it out during next full moon period. Long range tanks and extra oil tanks will be fitted by that time. While working up squadron will not be at immediate notice as a striking force.

(c) If you would prefer Messina or Palermo attacked first request you will inform me. Consider long range tanks should be fitted for both these operations.

(d) General service ratings were asked for to make squadron self contained so that you could move it elsewhere at short notice. Local Labour is used now but is only satisfactory if Squadron is to be permanently based on Malta.
(V.A. Malta 1215/18 to C.in C. Med.)

Mediterranean Volume, (Contd.)

Yugoslavia and the War. Inquiry re Army Evacuation.

Following for D.N.I. A. Possibility of entry of Yugoslavia into war in near or immediate future has more and more to be taken into account.

B. Yugoslavia war plans have been discussed in Military attache's tele. to War Office number 220 of 12 and number 223 of 13 both repeated Istanbul.

C. Difficulties of Yugoslavia maintaining long drawn out defence appear to have stimulated enquiry into possibility of evacuating at least part of army, with their equipment, in order that such forces might continue war on foreign soil and wherever most required by allied G.H.Q. as it is anticipated German Troops operating from Bulgaria would succeed in severing land communicatinns between Greece and Turkey, it is likely only way of evacuation, which could be relied on, would be by sea and probably from ports Salonica or Cavalla. Secret Government ctee. studying this problem has accordingly approached me unofficially so that I might enquire whether on basis of force of 300,000:

(a) H.M.Govt. would be able to supply at least part of shipping required and organize supply of local shipping.

(b) H.M. Govt. could supply adequacy of air defences including anti-aircraft guns and fighter aircraft for evacuation ports.

D. Growing determination of Yugoslavia not only resist attack but continue war even if driven out of their own country which the enquiry seems to indicate is to be welcomed and hoped sympathetic consideration may be given to problems involved.

E. H.M. Representative concurs in above. Please inform F.O.
(N.A. Belgrade 1845/21 to Adty).

Operations M.B.9 and "COLLAR".

Following extracts from Operation M.B.9. (which includes Operation "COLLAR') are forwarded for distribution to ships concerned in case no opportunity of forwarding complete orders arises.

2. Enclosure D. para.5. Force D.(RAMILLIES, NEWCASTLE, COVENTRY HERO H.M.S. HEREWARD H.M.A.S VAMPIRE H.M.A.S. VENDETTA) is to sail from Malta at 1200D 4 to R/V with Force C 250 Falfla 10 at about 1400 and proceed in company with Force C to reach 036° 15'N., 013° 00' E at dusk. On arrival at this position, Force D is to proceed to maximum speed to R/V with S.O. Force H in approx. 037° 45'N., 008° 15' E at 1200 D.5. 7.

/V.A.Malta ....

Mediterranean Volume, (Contd.)

Operations M.B.9 and "COLLAR".

V.A. Malta issue routeing instructions to Force D. 8 Para.Vanes are to be streamed for passage of Narrows. 9. After joining S.O. Force H. RAMILLIES and NEWCASTLE are to join Force B and remainder of Force D is to join Force F as ordered by S.O. Force H. 10 Force D will thereafter form part of Force F.

Enclosure F. After parting company with S.O. Force H, Force F is to proceed at best speed to convoy to R/V with Force A in 036° 15'N., 012° 50'E at 0800 D.6. 2. V.A. Malta issue routeing instructions for Force F. 3 are to be streamed during passage of Straits. 4 On arrival off Malta CLAN FORBES and CLAN FRAZER are to be detached to proceed into Malta escorted by HOTSPUR and one of 19th Divn. 5. COVENTRY, HERO and HEREWARD are to escort NEW ZEALAND STAR to Alexandria (route). 6. Remaining destroyer (? for the present) to join Force A. 7. Corvettes are to be detached to proceed to Suda Bay at daylight through 034 30'N., 015 00'E., 035 00'N., 017 00'E., 036 00'N., 020 00'E., Kithera Channel Suda Bay searched channel. 3 Force A. consisting of 1st Div. ILLUSTRIOUS, 3rd C.S. and 8 destroyers, Force C. consisting of 2nd Div. EAGLE 7th C.S. and 8 destroyers. 4. All times minus 2. (C.in.C. Med. 1619/21 to S.O. Force H.)

Assistance to Turkey.

Following from C.O.S. No. 28 to Cs. in C. Med. and M.E. Tel. No.26 (Adty's 1624/13) para 4A(i), assistance to Turkey. Should welcome your views on form and extend which our assistance to Turkey should take in the event of German or Russo-German aggression in following sets of conditions:-

(i) Turkey is attacked now and H.M. Govt. has decided that it is absolutely essential to give immediate assistance to the Turks despite increased risks on your own fronts and with priority over assistance to Greece.

(ii) Turkey is attacked during the latter half of March 1941, and you have received all the reinforcements which you are expecting by the middle of that month.

(iii) As for (ii) the Italian threats in the Western Desert, the Sudan and East Africa have been substantially reduced.
(1st S.L. 2351/23 to C.in C. Med. and E.I.)

MOST SECRET.

NOVEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Redistribution of Fleet.

Following from First Sea Lord.
(A) The following are urgent considerations which demand some redistribution of the Fleet.
(1) The appearance of SCHEER in the North Atlantic.
(2) The uncertainty as to whether SCHEER has proceeded South.
(3) The probable existence of five enemy surface raiders operating in the South Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans, who are taking a heavy toll of shipping.
(4) The increasing troop reinforcements to M.E. via the Cape.
(B) Under these circumstances it is considered imperative that raider hunting groups shall be formed without delay.
(C) It is under consideration for RENOWN and either ARK ROYAL or FORMIDABLE to constitute one of these hunting groups as soon as possible.
(D) The withdrawal of RENOWN from Force H can only be effected by the transfer of VALIANT from the Eastern to Western Basin.
(E) The formation of the hunting group in C. above would not permit of FORMIDABLE relieving EAGLE.
(F) Owing to shortage of cruisers in Home Waters and for troop convoy escorts, it will be necessary for MANCHESTER to return through the Mediterranean and for SOUTHAMPTON to be passed down the Red Sea.
(G) Taking into account the damage you inflicted on the Italian Battlefleet do you consider that the reduction in the Eastern Mediterranean force outlined above would prevent you implementing your 1357/16.
(H) If you decided that you could release VALIANT would you also be able to release RAMILLIES if MALAYA can be kept going until arrival of QUEEN ELIZABETH.
(I) Request your very early remarks and that you will make a tentative plan for passing both VALIANT and RAMILLIES through the Mediterranean during operation COLLAR.
(1st S.L. 0215/22 to C.in C. Med.).

In reply to A.M. 0215/22 BARHAM had had a serious machinery breakdown and was only able to return from Suda Bay by being supplied at sea with feeding water from escorting destroyers. The cause has not yet been ascertained.
2. Whilst fully appreciating difficulties of situation I feel it would be a great mistake to weaken unduly the Mediterranean Fleet at this time. During the time the two less severely damaged Italian battleships are under repair, and how long that will be we do not know, we have the opportunity to exploit recent successes and to bring much increased pressure to bear in central Mediterranean and thus on Italian communications with Pelagosa Island and Albania.

/ If VALIANT ...

MOST SECRET.

NOVEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

If VALIANT is withdrawn I shall be left with only one Battleship with endurance to operate for even a moderate period without refuelling. Suda Bay has admittedly improved things in this respect but it is not always practicable to detach battleships to fuel due to shortage of destroyers nor can Suda Bay be regarded for sometime yet as properly defended against submarines and torpedo air attack.
3. Similarly I shall be reduced to one battleship only which can engage the enemy at range at which he prefers to fight and enemy preponderance in eight inch cruisers makes it essential to have ships which can support our cruisers with long range fire.
4. We have cause of some ascendancy at sea over Italian Air Force due to ILLUSTRIOUS fighters and powerful AA fire of VALIANT and ILLUSTRIOUS. I do not say this will be entirely lost if VALIANT is withdrawn but it will be seriously affected as none of remaining battleships have modern AA armament or R D/F. If must be remembered that in no part of Eastern Mediterranean is Fleet clear of air attacks. (C.in C. Med. 1053/22.).

My 1057/22 Part 3.
5. With the poor repair facilites available here it is important I should have ships sound and clear of major defects. The removal of VALIANT would leave me with only WARSPITE on whom I can rely in this respect.
6. For the above reason I most strongly urge retention of VALIANT in Eastern Mediterranean. I am however prepared to surrender either BARHAM or MALAYA instead but former could not be passed through during Collar as defects are not yet remedied.
7. I will also surrender BERWICK, though reluctantly, as I feel she is more suited for the Trade Routes than Mediterranean, her maximum speed is 28 knots owing to turbine trouble. I shall hope to get H.M.S. EXETER as her relief when ready.
8. The hope I expressed in my 1357/16 must of course be appreicably diminished.
9. Amend reference in para. One to read 0215/22. (C.in C. Med. 1057/22).

MOST SECRET.

NOVEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN

Your 1057/22.
A. Your reasons for not withdrawing VALIANT are appreciated and concurred with.
B. As condition of BARHAM is uncertain and tubes for MALAYA are shortly arriving in Egypt it is undesirable to withdraw either of these ships at present time.
C. In default of being able to use RENOWN for a hunting group two 8 inch cruisers will be used and your offer to surrender BERWICK is therefore much appreciated. It is hoped you will manage to pass BERWICK through during Collar.
D. EXETER will be sent to you as soon as possible.
(1st S.L. 2157/22 to C.in C. Med.)

Mediterranean Volume. (Contd.)

Air Targets in Sicily.

Your 1215/18. Suggest you also consider, in conjunction with A.O.C., Med. attacks on following targets to shake morale in Sicily already reported low.

(1) Augusta, Oil tanks, Submarines and Seaplane bases.
(2) Catania, Hangars and Aerodrome Buildings.
(3) Syracuse, Seaplane Base.
(4) Trapani, Oil tanks, Submarines Base, also Cucumber laying.
(5) Palermo, Aircraft Factory, Power Station.
(D.N.A.D. 1029/26 to V.A. Malta.)

Bombing of Leghorn.

C.in C. Med. 1545/18. Under winter conditions Leghorn is outside range of all existing heavy bombers operating from this country, but it will come within range when new types come into service in the New Year. If you consider an early attack desirable, it is for consideration that Force H. should attack targets refered to in A.T. 1820/1/8 as an independent operation. Main Italian Air concentration is now reported in S.E. Italy.
(D. of P 1558/28 to C.in C. Med, S.O. Force H.)

Aircraft for Malta.

276. No withstanding Adty. tel. 1144/24/10 para.(b) Malta has still only 3 Glen Martin and of these only one is in action at the moment. As a direct consequence of this shortage of reconnaissance aircraft the undamaged battleships, which left Taranto on 13/11 remained unlocated for 15 days and are again unlocated.

(ii) Further more it was necessary to carry out duties with insufficient information and as a result major enemy forces were within 60 miles of the very valuable convoy before there was any indication of their presence. Owing to weakness of Recco. available from Malta it was not possible properly to back up aircraft and in consequence it would seem from information at present available to me that S.O.Force H was not provided with vital information about damaged enemy craft which shore based recco. might otherwise have made available to him.

(iii) Carrier Recco. is limited by a number of factors and it must be backed up by invaluable aid of shore based rc. for which Med. is ideally adapted. A.O.C.Med. and R.A.F. r/c. aircraft have done wonders but they cannot be expected to continue to work at this pressure let alone to increase scope of their activity to scale we so urgently need.

Mediterranean Volume, (Contd.)

Aircraft for Malta. (Contd.)

(iv) We must either decide to (? curtail) our operations in Mediterranean to conform to reconnaissance available to us or else these (corrupt Group) reinforcements for Malta must have absolute priority. If neither step is taken we are courting trouble.
(C.in C. Med. 1237/30).

Assistance to Turkey.

A.222 30/11. Following from C.in C. M.E. and A.O.C. in C. in reply to C.O.S. + 28 24/11. (See Adty. 2351/23 to C.in C. Med and C.in C. E.I.)

(i) Naval control of Eastern Med. is as essential and effective assistance to Turkey as for Greece; early liquidation of Dodecanese most desirable. For land battle main direct Turkish requirements will be for air assistance, particularly fighters, at earliest possible moment, and then A.A. Batteries, A.A. guns, tank units and artillery. These are all we lack ourselves. Turks have never asked for infantry formations and it may be better to employ any available on operations against Dodecanese.

(ii) Immediate air assistance with fighter aircraft to Turkey is out of the question except at expense of Greece. Takoradi reinforcements will no more than make good recent fighter wastage. It is even doubtful whether R.A.F. Squadron in Greece can be maintained with replacement aircraft.

(iii) Difficult to estimate what air and land formations will be ready for war by March 1941, but probable that we could implement Harrilan and provide additional anti-aircraft units.

(iv) Your par.3. In answer to your (1) and (2) we have replied on basis that some forces must be sent and increased risks taken. This equivalent to the Italians threats being substantially reduced. The air forces remaining in M.E. are the minumum required until at least I.E.A. has been liquidated but air pressure on I.E.A. has already been greatly reduced from necessity of moving Squadrons North and because 2 Squadrons are awaiting re-equipment with modern type.

(iv) In event of Russia entering the war, we may also be faced with commitment to defend Iraq, and in particular A.I.O.C.Z.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. No. T.O.O. Recd.2/1743/12).

MOST SECRET.

DECEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Dodecanese, Action Against.

My 1241/17/11. Basis of any action against Dodecanese must rest on subsequent protection we can afford to capture Island. We shall shortly have close on a battalion of troops in Crete ready for raids and if their successes are to be exploited these must be followed up. M.E. commitments make use of regular British troops not possible, it becomes therefore a question of other means (corrupt group).
2. (a) Is there possibility of provision of Royal Marines as suggested in my 1429/16/11?
(b) Can department be pressed for early declaration of policy regarding raising of Greek troops for garrison duties?
(c) A decision regarding future of islands probably on lines of para. One of Minister Athens tel. 1160 of 18/11.
3. If decisions are not reached quickly there is danger that we shall be unable to take full advantage of the present situation.
(C.in C. Med., 1645/2, to Admty.)

Aircraft for Malta.

Your 2037/27/11 and 1237/29/11.
Air Min. have replied to A.O.C. R.A.F. Med. Your need for more Glen Martins fully realised. Expect to deliver one during first week December followed shortly afterwards by two more. Air Ministry confirm that they are working to a total of 12 Glen Martins mentioned in A.M. 1144/24/10.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 2019/2 to C.in C. Med.)

Small Operations.

In view of importance of striking at Italy whenever possible, suggested you may be able to carry out some raids by a small party from a submarine.
3. Would you like some men from the Commandos who are specially trained in submarine raiding sent out at the next opportunity?
4. It is proposed to send twelve punts to Malta at the next opportunity; it is understood you have 14 punts at Alexandria.
5. If you can spare the submarine suggest raids should start now instead of waiting for the arrival of additional punts and trained personnel from this country at end of December.
6. Presume you have a list ofsuitable targets but list will be sent to you if you desire.
(1st S.L. I242/3 to C.in C. Med.)
(Docket No. P.D.09304/40).

MEDITERRANEAN.

Intelligence - Italy

My 1850/3. Italian Assistant N.A. also stated.
(1) Italians have abandoned use of torpedo carrying aircraft.
(2) Italian Admiralty and Senior Staff severely criticized for incompetence.
(3) No real cystem of co-ordination between all three arms. This contrasts unfavourably with British.
(4) Badoglio refused to sign orders to invade Greece.
(5) Naval Staff said even if military advance successful could not give naval support.
(6) Army leaders opposed invasion.
(7) Italians are concentrating on breaking our cyphers. Constant watch for any carelessness or too long a use. Italian decision to prosecute Abyssinian war in 1935 finally due to breaking signal from C.in C. Mediterranean at Alexandria reporting shortage of ammunition especially H.A.
Information was almost certainly in good faith.
(N.A., Madrid, 1925/3).

Employment of EAGLE.

My 1941/4. Situation referred to in Adty. 1917/24/11 has raised consideration whether from broad policy I should not offer to give up EAGLE from Mediterranean. Reluctant as carriers are the primary factor in providing the greater immunity from air attack.
Should it be decided to remove her, request that before this is done the reserve pilots and A/C pressed for in my 1535/27 and my 0031/27 should be provided and reserve A/C Squadrons formed ashore.
Question of cruisers would be accentuated by EAGLE's departure. The presence of 17 8 inch and 10 good 6 inch cruisers make it necessary always to provide heavy Cruiser protection and strains my resources considerably in this duty.
Greater use of trans-Mediterranean route makes the need of one or two fast minesweepers more necessary than ever as if we are to avoid losses in the Narrows it is of great importance to clear a route.
(C.in C. Med., 1959/4, to Admty.)

MOST SECRET.

DECEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Turkey, Service Missions.

Following for Admiral Kelly:-
Decided to establish British Naval and Military Missions in Turkey as soon as consent of Turkish Government has been obtained.
You will be appointed Head of the British Naval Mission, when formed.
Instructions to General Marshall-Cornwall, which contain an outline of the policy of H.M.G. with regard to Turkey, have been telegraphed to C.in C. and to the A.O.C.-in-C. M.E.
Paras. dealing with Gov. policy may be summarised as follows:-
(a) Of first importance to retain friendship of Turkey and to foster Turkish confidence in our ability to achieve final victory, with a view to ensuring that Turkey will resist by force of arms any attack by Germany, Italy, Russia or Bulgaria, or by any combination of these powers.
(b) Essential part of our strategy that Turkey should resist by arms any infringement of her neutrality or of her territory. This will entail fighting on the frontiers, and determined attempts to hold the Straits.
(c) In above circumstances it is our policy to support Turkey by all possible means including the despatch to Turkish territory of such forces as may be at the time available and necessary. Such action would be preceded by the necessary Staff Conversations. Your role in such Staff Conversations would be specified by C.in C., Mediterranean, and your position with regard to any British Naval forces or individuals sent to Turkish Territory would be defined by him.
All requests received by Missions from the Turkish Authorities for military and air forces and for war material, will be referred to the C.in C. in the Middle East. When a matter of policy or major importance is involved they will be repeated to the appropriate Service Department in London. H.M.G. will not be committed even by implication to the provision of any such requirements as may be referred to you by the Turkish Government. Nor will any encouragement be given to any expectation of specific support without prior sanction, in order that false hopes may not be raised.
(1 S.L. 0259/5, to N.A. Angora, for Adm. Kelly).

MOST SECRET.

DECEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Force H, Composition. Passage of M.T. Ships.

Admty. 1615/6, C.in C. Med.'s 1015/6.
(i) Force H at present consists of RENOWN ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD and about 10 destroyers.
(ii) In view of lack of shore based R.C. and problems of becoming engaged with superior enemy forces in restricted waters when convoy is in company do not consider passage of M.T. Ships in either direction should be attempted until:-
(a) MALAYA has joined force H and
(b) disparity between cruiser strength of Force H and that of enemy has been reduced by temporary reinforcement of Force H.
(iii) In order that cruisers required for (b) will be withdrawn from other duties for minimum period propose:-
(a) Passage of MALAYA from east to west be undertaken as one operation
(b) Passage of M T Ships in both directions be undertaken as second and subsequent operation when cruisers are available.
(c) T S R's be flown from ARK ROYAL to Malta in first or second operation according to date of arrival at Gibraltar.
(iv) Re second operation propose empty M T Ships proceed west through Narrows night before loaded M.T. Ships pass east, same escort being used for both. Suggest empty M.T. Ships might proceed independently along French coast during day that loaded M.T. Ships are passing south of Sardinia.
(S.O. Force H., 1351/7 to C.in C. Med.).

Genoa Bombardment.

My 1344/5. V.A. Malta reports R.C. of Genoa impossible before about 21/12.
(ii) If R.C. from U.K. could establish LITTORIO in dock at Genoa I suggest bombardment by RENOWN and one other capital ship in view of negligible shore defences and practicability of bombarding from unmineable waters.
(iii) To give reasonable prospect of achieving decisive results I consider RODNEY should be employed in conjunction with RENOWN for following reasons.- (S.O. Force H., 2218/7 to Admty.)

Transport of Aircraft.

Admty. 1615/6 para. 2.
Propose 821 (X) flight be fitted with external long range tanks in order that aircraft may be flown off at dawn of day of passage South of Sardinia.
Without long range tanks they cannot be flown off until vicinity of Galita Island, with consequent restrictions to ARK ROYAL's flying operations during critical day. Unsatisfactory alternative is to leave 6 of ARK ROYAL's aircraft at Gibraltar.
(S.O. Force H., 1844/8 to C.in C. Med.).

MOST SECRET.

DECEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Proposed Operation (M.T.ships MALAYA)

Your 1351/7.
It appears to me that difficulties of these operations chiefly arise from a divided object. Provided the defensive (?object) of safe and timely arrival of convoys is adhered to rigidly and heavy ships act as close escort to convoys then Italian Proponderance in cruisers seems of minor importance. This situation has arisen on at least two occasions when passing east going convoys to Malta.
(2) Subject to your concurrence it is therefore proposed to pass MALAYA with two or three M.T. Ships through to Western Mediterranean about 22/12 and to receive M.T. Ships referred to in Adty. 1613/6 about 28/12. On assumption that these proposals are convenient for S.O. Force H detailed proposals follow by signal.
(C.in C. Med. 1013/9 to S.O. Force H).

Your 1013/9 I agree that with force available it is definitely unsound to attempt to divide object and close cover is essential.
Should Italians summon sufficient initiative to attack convoy with battleships on one side and cruisers on the other a difficult situation would result.
But if you consider this possibility can be excluded then I agree (?disparity) in cruisers can be accepted. The addition of third battleship would give high degree of security. Will reply later re date.
(S.O. Force H 1615/9 to C.in C. Med.).

My 1615/9. Unless convoy is to be kept waiting in Atlantic SHEFFIELD should leave Gibraltar 23/12 relieve DIDO's A.M./25 convoy passing Straits night 26/27 and passing Narrows night 29/30. To achieve this MALAYA must pass Narrows night of 20/21.
(S.O. Force H 2011/9).

MEDITERRANEAN.

Transport of Aircraft.

S.O. Force H's 1844/8. It is known that Italian fighter patrols are often maintained many miles out to sea. In view of the extreme vulnerability of the Swordfish aircraft fitted with long range tanks A.O.C. Med. recommends these be routed from ARK ROYAL to Malta as follows:
a. To fly off well clear of Sardinia so as to arrive Malta shortly after dawn.
b. To pass well clear of the land to Northwards of line Galita Island Cape Farina Cape Bon Pantellaria.
2. If aircraft have to pass Pantellaria in daylight they should be routed to pass well to southwards of Island. Enemy fighters have recently been particularly active round Pantellaria and on one occasion French fighters attacked an aircraft passing Cape Bon within 20 miles of zone.
3. A.O.C. Med. also strongly recommends that extra oil tanks be fitted in addition to the long range petrol tank(s)
(V.A. Malta 1731/9.)

Dodecanese

H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., No.A.222 30/11 to Air Min. Following from C's of S. No.31 to C.in C. M.E. You say early liquidation of Dodecanese most desirable. In pre war appreciation in the Anglo-French-Turkish Military Convention reduction of Dodecanese was always contemplated as being ultimately of importance as it was then thought that in Italian hands the islands would be a thorn in our side. In present circumstances and the failure of the Italians to make effective use of their position in the Dodecanese we do not fully appreciate strategical arguments for capturing the islands by assault. Please send short appreciation. (1 S.L. 1236/12 to C.in C. Med.).

Operations M.C.2. M.C.3.

My 1315 Part 5 and final. (Note by W.D. This appears to be the only part of the signal which was received. The operation to which it refers was subsequently cancelled. This part of the signal consists only of amendments to the earlier parts.)

MOST SECRET.

DECEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Operation M.C.2.

Intend following operation M.C.two.
Convoy M.W.five A (fast) and M.W.five B (slow) leave Alexandria (?16th) to arrive Malta 19th and 20th respectively. Escort for M.W.five A MALAYA and four destroyers M.W.five B CALCUTTA one destroyer and Corvettes.
First division 1st Battle Squadron ILLUSTRIOUS 3rd C.S. and destroyers leave Alexandria early A.M./16 to arrive Suda Bay 17th, and leave on completion of fuelling of destroyers.
F.A.A. to attack (?Dodecanese) night 16/17th.
7th C.S. r.v. with me off Strovathi Island a.m./18. Whole force then proceed to carry out operation M.C.3 on night of 18/19th as follows (a) 7th C.S. (?detailed for) raid into Straits of Otranto as far as Bari - Durazzo. (b) Battleships bombard Valona.
(c) Aircraft of ILLUSTRIOUS assist (a) and (b) and carry out torpedo attack on shipping in Valona.
On completion of M.C.3 fleet proceed south of Malta to fuel destroyers. WARSPITE to enter Malta for night 20/21st whilst V.A.(A) conducts F.A.A. attack on a suitable target with remainder of force.
Convoy M.E.5A (fast) leaves Malta p.m. 20th escorted by MALAYA and five destroyers to arrive (?Alexandria) 0600/23. Convoy M.E.5 B (slow) leaves Malta a.m./20 escorted by Corvettes dissolves to join A.S.9 from Piraeus a.m./22 and proceeds to Port Said.
Fleet leaves vicinity of Malta a.m./21 for Alexandria.
F.O.C. 1st B.S. in BARHAM with EAGLE and 19th Div. Destroyers remain at Alexandria to conduct coastal operations off Western Desert as requisite.
(C.in C. Med. 1407/16).

MOST SECRET.

DECEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Dodecanese

Following from C's-in-C. in reply to Chiefs of Staff, No. 31.
Now that War appears to be moving towards Balkans and may break out in spring 1941, relative importance and need for early capture of Dodecanese is greatly increased.
Italian naval and air forces operating from Dodecanese will constitute threat to main lines of supply to Greece and or Turkey for any major operations against Balkans including air attacks on Rumanian oil. They also involve serious waste of effort now by forcing us to provide strong naval cover, A.S. and A.A. forces and fighter defences. Further, should Turkey and eventually Greece through separate peace with Italy be out of War, use of aerodromes in Dodecanese in addition to Crete and other Agean Greek Islands would be essential to continuance of strong air pressure on Balkans.
2. Presence of forces in Dodecanese has continued to be thorn in our side despite their ineffective use which has been due mainly to fact (openly admitted by Italians) that our convoys have always strong A.A. and A.S. escort. This heavy protection is however provided at expense of other operations and is one reason for acute shortage of light craft. Moreover, were German aircraft and possibly submarines to use the islands they would be more aggressive.
3. Torpedo bombers operating from Rhodes and Libya are serious menace and elimination of one alternative base is in itself almost sufficient reasons for capturing Dodecanese.
4. Appreciate that proposal in Anglo Turkish French military convention was ultimately to attack Dodecanese but now, after 6 months of War we have taken the measure of Italian fleet and suitable forces are becoming available. Out intention is first to adopt nibbling policy capturing smaller islands combined with raids by Commandos. Grip on Rhoes and Leros thus tightened and morale lowered. As result, main islands might fall by investment and entire group should be captured at small cost to us.
5. Italy might under German pressure offer surrender Dodecanese to Turks as bribe for remaining neutral. Desirable to forestall such eventuality. Finally, eventual political destiny of islands might be more easily settled if they were to fall to British before Turkish intervention. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 0835/16).

MOST SECRET.

DECEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Employment of Royal Marine Group.

My 1645/13. Until R.M. Group is required for a special operation under your orders, suggest it should be deployed for service in the Middle East as decided between yourself and C.in C.M.E.
2. A.A. Brigade is only being despatched with half its full establishment of guns and equipment. Should R.M. Group be required by you for service prior to arrival of additional guns, C.in C. M.E. being requested to make additional guns available for R.M's from M.E. Pool.
3. Instructions will follow as to allocation of balance of equipments required for R.M. Group.
(D. of L.D. 1640/17 to C.in C. Med.).

Fast Personnel Ships

Adty. 2324/14/11. I am willing to try passage of fast personnel ships though I cannot forecast whether or not ships will get through safely but for success the following are desiderata:
(a) Adequate air R.C's (see my 1941/21).
(b) Sufficient strong heavy units(?) at ends of Mediterranean to deal with any force Italians are likely to bring against either.
(c) Cruiser escort of sufficient strength to deal with a raid by enemy cruisers in narrows.
(d) A flotilla of destroyers and two A.A. cruisers as close escort.
2. The necessary destroyers could not all be supplied from Force 'H' or Med. Fleet without depleting screen essential for operating heavy ships, though perhaps four destroyers might be raised out of the nine needed.
3. Transits of such convoys are bound to have repercussions on movement of Malta and other Mediterranean convoys of great importance. For instance it has only been possible to raise the destroyers for "Excess" by bringing fleet West to meet it without a Malta convoy. This procedure so much delays Malta supplies and is most uneconomic as regards working of ships and personnel.
(C.in C. Med., 1945/21 to Admty.)

Turkish Policy.

Following is detail of conversation 18/12 between Admiral Kelly and Deputy Chief of Naval Staff Turkey.
(Ambassador, Turkey, T.H.I. 0435/22, to F.O.).

Assistance to Turkey.

Following from C's of S. No.34.
Our views regarding assistance to Turkey and future of the mission are as follows.
(1st S.L. 1117/22 to C.in C. Med.).

MOST SECRET.

DECEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Transport of Aircraft.

My 1844/8. Admiralty state only four external long range tanks are being (?sent in) ARGUS, and that any more required must be provided by ARK ROYAL.
ARK ROYAL has three tanks but only one set of other removable fittings required. Five aircraft should therefore be available.
Aircraft can only be flown off as proposed by A.O.C. Med. in V.A. Malta's 1731/9 subject to:-
(a) Modifications 159 and 160 being fitted and complete in 4 Swordfish in ARGUS before transfer to ARK ROYAL
(b) Oil consumption of these Swordfish being known to be 708 for this long flight
(c) Crew being known to be competent for long flight of which three hours will be in darkness.
Propose any of these aircraft unable to comply with above be flown to North front.
Propose that 6th aircraft be transferred to ARK ROYAL.
To reach farthest West flying off position the hours before dawn D 3 will involve ARK ROYAL and her escort being 80 miles to East of convoy at this time. Should enemy forces in vicinity, or should wind be unfavourable flying off will be postponed until dawn D 4. If not suitable then operation will be cancelled.
(S.O. Force H, 1930/24 as amended by 1035/25).

Operations, January.

If it is possible to leave me free of through convoy commitments until last week of January I hope to be able to operate offensive in central Mediterranean during mid January with whole fleet unencumbered by convoys.
(C.in C. Med., 1011/28, to Admty.)

Air Strength, Proposals for Increase.

1. Greater air resources are required for control of sea communications in the Central Med. It is now essential to harass enemy reinforcements reaching Libya.
2. Air Attack by R.A.F. and F.A.A. on merchant shipping and warships in Italian and Libyan ports is producing good results but it should be augmented by sinking ships on passage and at assembly ports.
Reliable reports of movements of enemy warships would provide greater security for passage of own warships and convoys through Mediterranean and at same time provide the opportunity for attacking them by sea and air.
3. In signal A.453 of 11/12 to Air Min. A.O.C. in C. submitted specific recommendations. (Details).
4. Through lack of adquate air R.C. and suitable long distance bomber-torpedo aircraft favourable opportunities for naval or air action in Med. may be lost and reinforcements and supplies may reach Libya without observation and immune from attack on passage.
(H.Q. R.A.F., M.E., 0758/31, to Air Ministry).

MOST SECRET.

DECEMBER, 1940.

MEDITERRANEAN.

New Ports in Turkey

Asking whether we could now supply necessary equipment for construction of 5 ports on Black Sea coasts and Iskandernn.
If shipping were to operate in Black Sea reconstruction ?"of" these ports would be great advantage for fuelling and repairs and these ports would be of great strategical value to Turkey and her allies.
(N.A. Angora, 1155/31 to Admty.)

MOST SECRET.

JANUARY,
1941.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

Air Operations Targets for Bombing.

A.O.C. Meds. A446 of 30/12. The following are the targets which appear specially suitable for bombing attacks from Malta.

(a) The Italian Battle Fleet particularly when alongside jetties.

(b) Battleships and cruisers in dock and surrounding Naval Establishments.

(c) Western Adriatic Ports Palermo and Tripoli.

(d) Concentration of shipping in these or other ports that may be disclosed by reconnaissance.

(e) Concentration of warships when closely berthed as disclosed by reconnaissance.

(f) Transport facilities e.g. Foggia Junction.

(g) Torpedo factories and (? fuel) installations.

(ii) The order given is not invariably the order of priority. Condition of weather, reports and importance of seizing good opportunities as soon as possible must be the deciding factors.
(C.in C. Med., 1705/2 to A.O.C. Mediterranean).

Greek Situation separate command proposed.

Greek situation is unstable. Their courage has pushed them far beyond their transport equipment and all safety. I know a lot is being done to send them military stores and this goes far to keep up their courage. But the five squadrons of aircraft promised in November are only four and all along front where wounded lie and die slowly or get bombed, there is no complaint heard only "send us aircraft".

B. Do you not think this as a command must eventually be independent of Egypt although of course in close co-operation and I believe it is urgent to achieve this now. It is impossible for A.O.C. in Greece to say he wants more aircraft when his Superior Officer in Egypt has already said that they are not available. Against Air Vice Marshal' advice I say myself that four squadrons of fighters and at least four bombers day and night could be operated here.

More Lorries and Anti-Aircraft guns, are needed.

/D

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

(d) A squadron of torpedo carrying aircraft at Araxos seems worth while and also an offensive mining operation Adriatic.
(M.A.Athens 1935/4 to Admty).

Bombing of Fiume.

Request consideration be given to bombing from U.K. of Whitehead Torpedo Factory at Fiume and any other Torpedo Factories in Italy whose location is known.
(C.in C. Med., 1405/5 to Admty).

Turkey discussions re Syria.

Following from Chiefs of Staff to C's in C. M.E. No.44.

W.R. para.6 (d) of C.O.S. telegram No.34 we consider the following line should be taken in discussion with the Turks regarding combined action with respect to Syria.
(1st S.L. 1823/5 to C.in C. Med.)

Aircraft Reinforcements.

Following from C's. of S. No. 45 to C'sin C. Med., and M.E.

Fully appreciate your reasons for desiring to strengthen the air force in Malta.

2. Demands for essential increases lately have taxed our resources to the utmost. All of them have had to be met at the expense of the Bomber Command, whose expansion is vitally important but is impossible so long as our available resources, especially is trained crews, continue to be diverted for other purposes.

3. Nevertheless, we have agreed in principle to add(details).
(Sec. to 1st S.L. 1153/7 to C.in C. Med.)

Operation (M.C.4.)

Operation M.C.4. Following is provisional plan for operation M.C.(?6) which you should be prepared to implement.

A. STUART will be sent on with SYDNEY to arrive Alexandria p.m. D.4.

/B.

Operation M.C.4. (Contd.)

B. Force X BARHAM EAGLE screened by STUART VOYAGER, WRYNECK, VENDETTE, VAMPIRE sail from Alexandria a.m. D.5, launching early night F.A.A. attack on Dodecanese Tobruk or Lybian coastal route p.m. D.5. at F.O.C. 1st B.S. discretion. Proceed thence westwards south of Crete to be joined by V.A.L.F. with 7th C.S. a.m. D.6.

C. Force A. to deliver F.A. attack on Dodecanese a.m./D.6, thence to fuel Suda Bay.

D. Force A proceed up west coast of Greece during night D.6/D.7 to be joined by 3rd C.S. and destroyers from EXCESS after they have fuelled Suda Bay. Force A to operate against Italian shipping route or warships as revealed by reconnaissance during daylight D.7. 3rd C.S. and Destroyers and aircraft as striking force.

E. Force X to operate against Tripolitan shipping route during daylight D.7, fuel Malta night D7/D8 and operate against shipping again daylight D.8 while proceeding Eastwards to Alexandria.

F. Force A operating into Adriatic or against Calabrian coastal route as requisite on night D7/D8. Thence to Alexandria passing North of Crete.

G. Possible rat hunting in Dodecanese by Destroyers night D8/D9.

H. Maximum scale of R.A.F. air reconnaissance required D.7 and D.8 along Sicilian coast, North Ionian sea and to South and West of Malta and 830 Squadron ready to strike in Western sector.

J. One destroyer would be detailed to join Force X p.m. D.5 and a further one D.6.

K. DEFENDER would go to Alexandria with M.E. (corrupt group) and be available for inshore squadron as will two Corvettes from M.E.6. V.A. Malta pass to A.O.C. Mediterranean and R.A. Alexandria inform H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. (?201) group and Captain (S) 1. Secret. (C.in C. Med. 1137/7).

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

Greek Situation.

It is very disturbing that no reply is forthcoming to H.M.Minister's various telegrams about establishing our air forces at Salonica, vide his thirty Jan. 6th.

(B) Air Vice Marshal is awaiting now to put air forces at Salonica for the present war but it is more the future war which he General Heywood and I find so disturbing. Germans are concentrating in South East Europe and by putting out a little propaganda about not attacking Greece unless provoked by British forces at Salonica have achieved all they desire, that is our complete inaction whilst they prepare. When they do strike we shall not only be unready at the time but perhaps unable ever to retrieve out lost opportunity. Further presence of strong British air forces at Salonica would much heerten Yugo Slavia and Turkey and it is a firm attitude by Yugo Slavia and Turkey which is now of paramount importance in Balkans.
(N.A.Athens 1910/8 to D.N.I.).

Tora Gear.

Development of wings and flight control mechanism for attachment to aircraft torpedoes now reached stage of service trials. Gear is known as TORA and objects of its development are -

(a) To enable torpedoes to be dropped from longer range and greater height without increase in total time of travel to target, and

(b) to facilitate dropping torpedoes of greater speeds than 150 knots.

2. Development of azimuth sight not yet sufficiently advanced to admit of profitable use of TORAS against moving targets. Against ships in harbour, however, use appears possible without this instrument if personnel are carefully trained in special methods of attack.

3. No theoretical limit to length of gliding flight, but practical limits probably about 3000 yards, unless and until accurate director and depression sight available.

Tora Gear, (Contd.)

4. Both Swordfish and Albacores can carry TORAS. Small loss of aircraft speed and range involved.

5. It is under consideration to select and train a T.S.R. Squadron in use of TORAS for attack on ships in harbour as preliminary to bringing this gear into naval use.

6. Request your views on potential value of TORAS in Mediterranean Fleet.
(5th S.L. 1646/9 to C.in C. Med.)

Enemy Trade, Italy. URSULA.

Enemy trade between East Coast of Spain and Italy reported to be on increase. N.A.Madrid states one sinking would send Insurance rate sky high.

2. As immediate measures in regard to other steps propose URSULA due to sail Malta about 16/1 makes detour to Barcelona, advertise her presence at several points off Coast. Passage to Malta would be increased by about two days.

3. If further delay of four days is acceptable would like URSULA also to visit Genoa for one day to obtain information regarding enemy patrol and exhibition of navigation lights required for projected bombardment.

4. Early reply requested.
(S.O.Force H., 1255/14 to C.in C. Med.)

Air Squadrons New Units.

Your 0201/3. Re training of reserve personnel and formation locally of a second supernumerary Fighter Squadron to be numbered 885. Additional T.S.R. Squadron to be numbered 817 will have to be formed in the U.K. with Albacores about April, and will be transferred to Mediterranean later. This squadron will be trained in the use of TORAS subject to your views after considering Admty. 1646/9.
(5th S.L.1732/14 to C.in C. Med.)

Enemy Dive-Bombers Sicily.

Reference Admty 1649/13.

2. A.O.C.in C. considers that number of Hurricanes are too (? small) to justify strafing of Sicilian aerodromes not only because of losses but because these are likely to cause high percentage of unserviceability which might reduce total force dangerously. Blenheims are completely occupied in Greece and Red Sea.

3. A.O.C.in C. is giving orders to attack Sicilian aerodromes with bombers whenever these dive-bombers can be located. (Rhodes) is also being attacked during sure light periods to prevent establishing dive-bombers which might make Suda Bay untenable and seriously prejudice running of Aegean convoys.

Fighter Protection, Malta.

4. S.O. Aircraft Carriers Med. is being instructed to work out at once in conjunction with (? Middle) East and A.O.C. Med. a system of fighter direction at Malta to intercept formations and toprovide an umbrella of Fulmars and Hurricanes to cover arrival of convoys.

5. Fulmars are too slow for attack on dive-bomber aircraft and any way possible of increasing supplies of Hurricanes or Brewsters will be welcome.
(C.in C. Med., 1815/14 to Admty).

Request for Brewsters.

My 1815/14. I understand there are a large number of Brewsters (fleet fighters) on order in U.S.A. and that some are ready for delivery. These machines appear specially suitable to deal with dive-bombers for which Fulmars are not really fast enough. Request consideration may be given to shipping these direct from U.S.A. to Takoradi for onward flight to Egypt. Pilots would also be required. These aircraft should be fitted with arrestor gear for deck landings though it is intended to use them from shore bases in Crete and Malta as well as from carriers.
(C.in C. Med., 1817/14. to Admty).

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

Sicilian Aerodromes, Attack.

Your 1325/17.

A. It would appear that 830 Squadron at Malta would be very suitable for night bombing attacks on Sicilian aerodromes observing that each aircraft can carry a load of 1500 lbs. of C.P. Bombs.

B. Torpedo attack on Messina train ferry termini might also well be profitable. San Giovanni and Reggio appear best objectives. Neither appears to be strongly defended. Hits at the base of the moveable landing bridge might cause great interference with armament transport.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1750/18 to C.in C. Med.)

Attack on Malta Aerodrome.

Combined Service report Malta from 1700 hours 17/1 to 1700 18/1. All times G.M.T.
No reccos. owing to swell and aircraft unserviceability. 2040 to 2055. Enemy approached but did not pass over Island. 0840 to 0845. Single enemy high recco. Guns engaged no bombs.

1315 to 1550. About 80 JU.87's and 88's covered by Fighters at very high level attacked in waves aerodromes Hal Far and Luqa. About 40 1000 lb. bombs scored on each target. Luqa two hangers completely destroyed, 2 badly damaged. 1 Wellington burnt out. 1 Glenn Martin badly damaged. All remaining aircraft slightly damaged by shrapnel. Aerodrome unserviceable. Electric power, telephone communication and water cut off. Casualties. Hal Far 1 hangar direct hit, Hurricanes inside write off. 3 Swordfish burnt out, 1 other total loss. Several aircraft minor damage. Many craters but North West - South East strip serviceable. Telephone communication completely out, water mains hit, 5 Hurricanes and 3 Fulmars on patrol. Hurricanes claim 5 confirmed. 2 Fulmars lost, 1 pilot saved and 1 enemy claimed by this Fighter Confirmed. A.A.fire was intense and accurate, 3 direct hits at least being claimed but confirmation not yet available.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Med. 1825/18).

MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY. JANUARY, 1941.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

Attacks on Malta 16/1.

516. My 1821/16 and my 2053/16. Following damage due to raids by about 70 JU.88 and JU. 87 dive bombers attacking in 2 waves.

(ii) ESSEX (M.T.Ship) hit in engine room badly damaged. Cargo undamaged. About 15 of crew killed or missing 23 wounded.

(iii) ILLUSTRIOUS hit again aft. No further casualties.

(iv) PERTH received bad shaking from large bomb which burst underwater. (damage)

(v) Dockyard hit in many places and considerable damage to buildings eletric power and telephone services. Number 2 dock is out of action. Several unexploded bombs being dealt with.

(vi) Bombs fell in Valetta, Vittoriosa, Senglea causing damage and heavy civilian casualties especially in Senglea.

(vii) Rinella W/T Station hit twice. Port wireless was out of action for about one hour.

(Viii) Enemy lost 9 certain, 3 probable and two possible.
(V.A.Malta 1021/17).

Employment of bombers against dive bomber bases.

V.A.Malta's 1821/16. Great importance of giving maximum support to Greece and the reason for which orders were given to A.O.C. Mediterranean for the Wellingtons at Malta to concentrate on Adriatic targets are appreciated, but situation since those orders were issued has radically changed. The vital thing now is to keep Malta in action. I request therefore that H.M.Govnt., will give immediate consideration to giving first priority to the destruction of these aerodromes and establishments on which these dive bombers are based. If these aircraft were to gain mastery over Malta defences it would not be easy to re-establish situation there once heavy damage has been inflicted. At present in accordance with Air Ministry orders Wellingtons have been instructed by A.O.C. Med., to regard Adriatic ports as their targets.
(C.in C. Med., 1325/17 to Admty).

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

Your 1325/17. Judging by the action he has already taken, I do not think A.O.C.in C. Med. feels that his hands are tied but will make sure.
(See to 1st S.L. 1736/17 to C.in C. Med.)

FORMIDABLE. Your 0746/17, Escort of FORMIDABLE through Red Sea. I hope it will be possible to provide destroyers.
(C.in C. Med., 1109/18 to C.in C. E.I.)

ILLUSTRIOUS. Consider it imperative that any reference to ILLUSTRIOUS in broadcast should be avoided until she has left Malta. Broadcasts suggesting recent dive bombing attacks at Malta did no further damage to ship are likely to provoke further attack, essential to avoid if ship is to get away.
(V.A.Malta 1251/18 to Admty).

Subject to final trials of steering gear ILLUSTRIOUS will be ready to sail p.m./20 Anticipate maximum safe speed will be about 23 knots.

(ii) Consider ILLUSTRIOUS could sail without destroyer escort after dark for Alexandria making best speed and passing through following positions "A" 035 24'N., 014 12'E. "B" 034 30'N., 018 24'E. thence on course 270 to meet destroyers at dawn. Anticipate ILLUSTRIOUS would be in position B at 0700 - 2.

(iii) Ionian Sea reconnaissance would be arranged 19/1 and 20/1.

(iv) BRECONSHIRE and CLAN MACAULAY will also be ready to sail p.m./20 as previously reporte
(V.A.Malta 1257/18).

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MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

Subject to final trial of steering gear ILLUSTRIOUS is expected to be ready to sail from Malta p.m./20 with maximum safe speed 23 knots.

Request you will conduct (2 corrupt groups) object of safe arrival ILLUSTRIOUS at Alexandria as follows.

A. Select and signal date of D one.

B. 4 Destroyers from Suda Bay to arrive Malta at daylight D.2. Important that destroyers passage and arrival Malta should be unobserved, (corrupt group) date of D.1 must be (corrupt group) until weather permits high speed.

C. Cruiser and two destroyers to reach approx. longitude 017 00'E., by 2359/D two to cover passage of ILLUSTRIOUS.

D. YORK and AJAX to sail from (? Piraeus) and Alexandria so as to join you on D.2. GLOUCESTER and PERTH will be sent to join or support you if possible.

E. ILLUSTRIOUS to sail Malta D two screened by 4 destroyers to R/V with you a.m./D three.

F. Whole of force proceed Alexandria.

G. On receipt of orders D.1 V.A.Malta is requested to arrange with H.Q. Med., for maximum possible reconnaissance in Ionian Sea on D.2. and D.3. Object security of operation.

H. Preserve utmost secrecy.
(C.in C. Med. 1135/19 to V.A.L.F.)

Second very heavy air raid again concentrated on ILLUSTRIOUS now seriously damaged. As far as can be seen port engine out of action feet fractured port boiler room holed auxiliary machinery in the port and centre boiler rooms castings broken. Am evacuating ships' company whilst endeavouring to make ship seaworthy and capable of steaming if a lull enables this to be done. Do you agree sailin BRECONSHIRE and CLAN MACAULEY at dark without escort as otherwise they must soon be damaged.
(V.A.Malta 1505/19 to C.in C. Med.)

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MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

Your 1259/19 not to V.A.L.F. Request you report if there is any alteration in steaming capabilities or date of ILLUSTRIOUS readiness for sea as set forth in your 1257/18.
(C.in C. Med., 1639/19 to V.A.Malta).

Your 1505/19. I cannot provide escorts. It is better that damage in harbour should be risked rather than their loss at sea with complete loss of personnel.
(C.in C. Med., 1849/19 to V.A.Malta).

Naval Situation.

My 1945/19 part one. Situation out here which is growing difficult is as follows:-

(a) Malta being heavily raided and urgently necessary to get ILLUSTRIOUS and large merchant vessels away but weather has recluded sending destroyer escort up to present. These will proceed as soon as possible and available cruisers are assembling Suda Bay prior to providing cover in central Mediterranean.

(b) Convoy "Excess" left Piraeus early today CLAN CUMMING submarined off San Georgio but I hope has now reached Piraeus.

(d) Convoy important military stores for Greece due to leave Alexandria p.m./20.
(C.in C. Med. 1943/19).

My 1945/19 part two final.

(d) Attack on Tobruk delayed by weather. Inshore squadron standing by to bombard. Cruiser and Destroyer cover withdrawn for more urgent operation.

(e) EAGLE out of action due to trouble with stern GLANDS, but GLASGOW not out of dock till 22/1. GLOUCESTER at Port Said having damaged D.C.T. removed. PERTH Alexandria with minor (word omitted) from near miss, requiring docking.

/f.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

(f) Barely enough destroyers can be raised to send two battleships to sea to support operation to get ILLUSTRIOUS and merchant vessels away from Malta.

(g) Most urgent requirement is more fighters for Malta and am pursuing this with A.O.C.M.E. (C.in C. Med. 1945/19 to Admty).

ILLUSTRIOUS again Damaged.

Second heavy raid today did further damage to ILLUSTRIOUS from near misses (details). May be possible to repair in 3 or 4 days.

2. We have again taken heavy toll of Hornets today 11 certain 9 very probably, 4 damaged so far (corrupt group). Box Barrage has driven them to release at higher levels consequently less accurate bombing but heavy damage all round dockyard. DECOY and BERYL damaged. Hope DECOY will not be delayed. 2 docks out of action.

3. City again badly damaged. Casualties later.
(V.A.Malta 2301/19).

ILLUSTRIOUS.

My 1135/19 being passed to F.O.C. B.S.1. Proceed with operation as soon as you can. ILLUSTRIOUS cannot be ready to sail at once BRECONSHIRE and CLAN MACAULAY are to be sailed escorted by two of the destroyers, remaining two waiting for ILLUSTRIOUS. V.A.L.F. to cover.

(ii) If sailing of ILLUSTRIOUS is unlikely within two or three days all four destroyers are to sail with M.E.7 as above.

(iii) If ILLUSTRIOUS can sail at once, M.E.7 wait.

(iv) F.O.C. 1st B.S. with BARHAM, VALIANT and six destroyers will be sailed p.m./d one to support your force from position S.W. of Crete p.m./d two as required by you. Ships are at two hours notice.

(v) Probably GLOUCESTER will be sailed with F.O.C. 1st B.S. to join you as requisite visible off director only.

(vi) Essential that V.A.Malta should signal date for ILLUSTRIOUS as soon as possible.
(C.in C. Med. 1037/20).

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MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

M.E.7 to sail.

My 1037/20.Re V.A.Malta 2301/19. Proceed with operation now weather permitting with object of getting out ME.7. p.m./21 northward and westward. Report your intentions immediately so that 1st F.O.C.B.S. can be sailed. GLOUCESTER will not be available but PERTH will join F.O.C. 1st B.S's Commands.
(C.in C. Med. 1401/20 to V.A.L.F.

ILLUSTRIOUS.

Ref. my 2301/19. State of ILLUSTRIOUS is that if no further damage appears consider she can sail p.m. on D three 23/1. Details of damage. Hope engines able to be used up to 20 knots.
(N.O.I.C. Malta 1927/20).

Operation "Inspection"

V.A.Malta 1927/20. (corrupt group) first sentence of my 1402/20. Your should arrange operation with object of safe passage of ILLUSTRIOUS 23/1 being D.2.
(C.in C. Med. 2349/20 to V.A.L.F.)

M.E.7.

Your 2349/20. Understand intention now to be to cancel M.E.7 sailing. Please confirm. In view of approaching (?undertakings) consider destroyers should proceed Malta 21/1. Do you wish them recalled. Intend to continue to regard 21/1 as day one ILLUSTRIOUS sailing day three.
(V.A.L.F. 0411/21 to C.in C. Med.)

Your 0411/21. Confirmed. 2. Concur.
(C.in C. Med. 0854/21 to V.A.L.F.)

Operation "Inspection".

N.O.I.C. Malta's 1927/20 four destroyers sail for Malta from Suda Bay tonight. Battle Squadron less WARSPITE will leave Alexandria tomorrow to cover. Four Cruisers under V.A.L.F. will provide cover in central Mediterranean.
(C.in C. Med., 0857/21 to Admty).

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

Malta
A.A.
Defence.

Admty's. 1756/18. Two U.P. Projector equipments ex GLASGOW have already been mounted at Suda Bay. Desired to retain one equipment in HARHAM to gain experience at sea. Would be glad if four equipments at Gibraltar could be spared for Malta and replaced.
(C.in C. Med. 1257/24 to Admty).

Kabret
M.L.C.
Base.

Proposal in my 0127/11 para. (d) was based on assumption that a total of 500 personnel would have to be accommodated and administered. This number has already left England. ?It is now evident that further personnel are about to be sent out but I am not aware how many or when these will be sent. Admiralty 1039/10/12 and Admty. 1936/13/11 refer. Request information as follows:-

(a) What extra landing craft personnel will have to be accommodated at Kabret over and above 500 already en route. When are they likely to be sent.?

(b) Depending on (a) what further administrative personnel is being provided including officers?

(c) What number and type of craft is it intended to base at Kabret?

(d) Has any Officer been appointed command on arrival?
(C.in C. Med. 1615/24 to Admty).

GLASGOW.

A/T 1331/22. Owing to difficulties with Contractor GLASGOW will not now be ready for service before 8/2. at the earliest and will not therefore be available for this service.
(C.in C. Med. 1215/26 to Admty).

Situation.

Situation is now as follows:-
EAGLE is in dock and (corrupt group) be available until about 30/1. ILLUSTRIOUS is waiting to enter dock to be made seaworthy. She arrived with 1200 tons of water on board and most of her oil fuel contaminated.

Situation (Contd.)

(2) Air raid on canal area by German aircraft from Rhodes took place on night 17/18 Jan. Two Heinkels subsequently force D landed near Sollum and crew captured.

(3) Tobruk is now open to sea traffic and army are proceeding with installation of A.A. and coast defences. TERROR is acting as guard ship pending establishment of coast defences. Italian Cruiser SAN GEORGIO completely gutted. Boom defence 80% efficient and good depots. A good number of small craft and lighters in these, plentiful coal and water. Considerable damage to quay and cranes and a number of sunken vessels in harbour 1. Internal communications efficient. CUCUMBERS swept but did not explode. Evacuation of prisoners and provisions of supplies to Tobruk proceeding.

(4) PERTH providing cover in Aegean will be joined by AJAX shortly. PROTECTOR is on way to lay boom in Suda Bay. Convoy A.S.13. consisting of 15 ships approaching Port Said A.N.14. due to sail from Port Said and Alexandria 28/1.

(5) It is intended to run small fast convoys in and out of Malta at end of month.

(6) During present period while I am without an aircraft carrier and operations are consequently curtailed opportunity is being taken to refurbish destroyers and cruisers.

(7) BONAVENTURE is now down to 100 rounds of A gun 50 L.A. and 50 consumption A.
(C.S.3. 1917/26, C.in C. Med. 1935/26).

Operation "Breach".

My 1844/23 confirmed. D one day for operation Breach is Feb 2nd.
(C.in C. E.I. 1226Z/27 to C.in C. Med.)

BONAVENTURE, ammunition.

My 1401/27 Part one.
BONAVENTURE 5.25 ammunition position which is causing me concern is as follows:-

/Ship

BONAVENTURE Ammunition.

Ship has 547 H.E. 492 S.A.P. 912 full charges remaining. Nearest replenishment is in CAPETOWN CASTLE and MONARCH of BERMUDA 525 H.E. and 100 S.A.B. which will only complete ship to 58% H.E. and 43 % S.A.P. of nominal outfit assuming she fires no more in meantime. (ii) Next shipment known to me in W.S.6. expected here early in April exact quantity not known. (iii) BONAVENTURE in present state is of no use in Mediterranean except for her W/D.F. which of course is invaluable. (C.in C. Med. 1359/27).

My 1401/27 Part Two Final.
(iv) Alternatives appear (a) to send BONAVENTURE through (?Mediterranean) to Gibraltar to meet ammunition from U.K. there and then send her back again. This is not considered a fair risk in present circumstance

(b) To send another cruiser of same class through Mediterranean with all ammunition she can (?tranship). This is less unattractive than (a) and is worth considering under cover of some operation by Force H.

(c) To rush ammunition to Cape and send BONAVENTURE there to collect it. This is safest method but it will deprive Med., Fleet of a cruiser and a R.D.F. Ship for three or four weeks.
(C.in C. Med., 1401/27 to Admty).

Salonica German Threat.

German M.A. has informed Greek M.A. that Germans will occupy Salonica as soon after 2/3 as weather permits. There is no question of this action being (group omitted?) only if we make a base there. Germans expect Greece, Turkey to offer no resistance.
(A.A.Ankara, 0729/27 to Air Ministry).

German Aircraft in Sicily.

Admiralty's 1947/27. This information is most interesting. I should be even more interested to know what is being sent out to deal with these German aircraft.
(C.in C. Med., 1025/28 to Admty).

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

Ammunition for BOMAVENTURE.	Your 1401/27. In addition to your para.one 100 S.A.P. and 400 H.E. are in S.S. AMERIKA left Freetown 20/1. Your para. two, quantity in W.S.6. is 1964 S.A.P. and 3250 H.E. At this stage it is not possible to send a second D.I.D.O. to the Eastern Mediterranean. (D.T.S.D. 1401/28 to C.in C. Med.)
M.T.B's. for Malta.	Is it the intention to send some M.T.B's to Malta apart from those being sent to (? Eastern) Med., vide, Admty 2133/6/12? Admty's 2215/24/12 and 2248/20/12 appear to suggest intention to base M.T.B's at Malta. When may M.T.B's referred to in Admty's 2133/6/12 be expected to arrive? (C.in C. Med. 2245/28 to Admty).
ILLUSTRIOUS.	Following work has to be done on ILLUSTRIOUS at Alexandria to make her sufficiently seaworthy for an ocean passage (Details). 2. Estimated above work will take about 14 days. 3. It is intended to remove R D/F installation and fit it in GLOUCESTER. 4. Request Admty instructions regarding destination of ILLUSTRIOUS. Presume consideration is being given to possibility of refitting her in U.S.A. (C.in C. Med. 2255/28 to Admty).
	Your 2255/28. Destination Durban, but beyond this uncertain. Possibility of refitting in U.S.A. under consideration, but nothing can be settled until Lend and Lease Bill is passed. (1st S.L. 1332/30 to C.in C. Med.)
Air Reconnaissance in Reply to German Air menace from Sicily.	My 2007/30 part 1. Admty. 0027/29. The first and foremost need is fighters both shore based and carrier borne. These are required - (a) to reinforce as well as keep up to strength fighters at Malta. (b) to develop really powerful carrier-borne fighter prectection over fleet. (c) to maintain strong fighter force at such key points as West Libyan Supply Ports, Alexandria, Crete and Canal area. (d) to provide adequate reserve for above. (C.in C. Med. 1901/30).

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MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

My 2007/30, part 2.

2. Malta can put perhaps 12 fighters in the air against the 150 dive bombers 20 minutes away in Sicily. I feel this would be regarded as a little inadequate over any port of importance at home.
Requirements (a) and (c) do not call for carrier borne fighters.
(C.in C. Med. 1907/30).

My 2007/30 part 3.

4. A further early need is for maximum of greater endurance to counter enemy long range fighters. Till these are available we must rely on ordinary fighters but it is desirable to increase radius of the "Umbrella" over Malta particularly as nights shorten. The floating crews and ground organization is most important for aircraft referred to in this and preceding para.

5. My second need is for R. D/F fitted ships. The threat to ships within dive-bombing radius and without R. D/F was clearly shown in the sinking of SOUTHAMPTON whereas V.A.L.F. on 24/1 was able to put up a much more convincing display due to the presence of BONAVENTURE and AJAX. I am doing what I can about this by putting ILLUSTRIOUS R. D/F into GLOUCESTER II.
(C.in C. Med. 1933/30).

My2007/30. Part 4.

6. Any increase in A/A devices such as (? balloons) and guns will be very welcome. We have for instance only eight heavy A/A guns in Crete. The shortage of A/A guns for merchant vessels and small craft particularly close range weapons such as Oerlikons is also acute.

7. All above are defensive measures. A.O.C.in C. is extended to his uttermost limit to meet calls to bomb targets in support of our various operations; yet it is to my mind essential to bomb out German air nests in Sicily, Libya, Dodecanese or wherever they develop.
(C.in C. Med. 1941/30).

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

My 2007/30 part 5.

A.O.C.in C. however has not the forces to put real weight into these attacks. If it can be done this is much the most economic answer since it destroys enemy and at same time prevents damage to our key points.

8. To meet these demands is difficult as stated in C.O.S. No.45 but if it cannot be done it is hoped H.M.Govnt., will realise we cannot effectively meet this greatly increased scale of air attack which has only just started to develop and at same time carry out satisfactorily such enterprise as those proposed in C.O.S.49 and 50. Nor can we in addition build up strategic reserves referred to in C.O.S. 50 save at expense of vital offensive and defensive Air forces engaged elsewhere.
(C.in C. Med. 1959/30).

Suez Canal.

My 2007/30 part 6 final.

(ix) To sum up: as many fighters as can be spared more bombers and R. D/F ships and an increase of A/S guns and devices are required very speedily. It will be more economical in the end to deal drastically now with this German threat. Already it is threatening to close centrol Mediterranean to some extent and has seriously damaged out best repair base and may well do same to our remaining one unless the matter is dealt with vigorously. Another matter of grave consequence is attack on Canal. Our A/A defences there are very weak and continuance of raids means withdrawing defences and fighters from other services where they can ill be spared.

(x) These are my personal views and though I believe A.O.C.in C. M.E. to be in general agreement he has not actually seen terms of this message.
(C.in C. Med., 2007/30 to Admty, V.A.Malta.)

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MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (Contd.)

Operation M.C.7. to assist "Result".

Following operation M.C.7 is intended with object of creating diversion in East Mediterranean to assist operation "RESULT" and to cover convoy movements in Aegean.

2. Battle Squadron and EAGLE leave Alexandria a.m./1st proceeding to operate in area west of Crete on 2nd and 3rd.

3. V.A.L.F. with ORION, BONAVENTURE and few destroyers leave (?Alexandria) a.m./1st to carry out sweep of (waters?) round Rhodes on night of 1st/2nd and rejoin Battle fleet to west of Crete p.m./2.

4. DEFENDER to be detached from Battle fleet p.m./2 to arrive Malta a.m./3 to refit. DECOY to join fleet a.m./3 after refit at Malta.

5. Movements of these destroyers to be covered by Cruisers (? on the night of 2nd/3rd.

6. Whole fleet to return Alexandria to arrive p.m./4.
(C.in C. Med. 1427/31 to Admty).

MOST SECRET.

War Diary. February 1941.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

Operation M.C.7 to assist "Result".

My 1427/31. Para. four should read as follows:- DEFENDER to be detached from Battle Fleet p.m/2 to arrive Malta a.m./3 to refit. DECOY to join fleet a.m./3 after refit at Malta. (C. in C. Med, 0501/1).

German Air Position.

A.77 1/2. Following is German air position in Mediterranean as I see it. German Bomber Units definitely identified in Mediterranean now amounts to 390 bombers and dive bombers besides air transport and R.C. a/c. German air bases and H.Q. confirmed in Dodecanese and almost certainly in Tripoli as well as Sicily. "M" source confirms that main objective of air forces is our sea communications including our main ports in eastern Medn. and blocking of Canal. Several exploratory German flights have been made over Egypt and Palestine using Dodecanese and Libya as advanced bases and several very heavy bombs and floating mines have been already dropped in Suez Canal.

In my view we may expect concentrated attacks on Alexandria Port Said and Suez Canal as soon as Germans have completed their administrative arrangements and organisation. German air transports are very active and already bomb and probably mine stocks have been laid down in Libya. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1056/1).

Cruiser reinforcement.

Owing to increased air menace in the Mediterranean a DIDO Class Cruiser must proceed to reinforce C. in C. Med. She should form additional ocean escort for W.S.6. as far as Freetown after which one of the larger cruisers should return to U.K. (1st S.L. 0028/2).

/Reinforcement.....

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (contd).

Reinforcement of Meditn. Fleet.

To increase the cruiser and destroyer forces in the Mediterranean and to provide for other commitments the following have been decided.
A. Cruisers to join Med. Fleet.
(I) BONAVENTURE.
(2) To provide further A.A. reinforcement CARLISLE must join Med. Fleet. If C. in C. E.I. considers an A.A. Cruiser is still essential in the Red Sea, CALCUTTA and CARLISLE are to exchange stations. C. in C. E.I. to report.
(3) One DIDO Class Cruiser will accompany W.S.6.
(4) EXETER should be ready to leave U.K. early April; intended she should escort W.S.8.
B. Destroyers to join the Meditn. Fleet.
(1) JAGUAR ENCOUNTER and ISIS are to replace HOSTILE, HYPERION and GALLANT.
(2) NIZAM and NAPIER should be ready to leave U.K. about the 3rd week in Feb.
(3) KANDAHAR KIMBERLEY KINGSTON on arrival of "Hunt" Class in Red Sea at the end of April.
(4) "Hunt" Class from Red Sea should the threat from Massawa be liquidated.
C. In addition, so as to balance the A/S forces at Gibraltar and Freetown 2 V class destroyers from the 13th Flotilla are to join the South Atlantic Command and JONQUIL and GERANIUM are to join North Atlantic Command.
D. F.O.C.N.A. is requested to sail as soon as practicable.
(1) ENCOUNTER and ISIS via the Cape after return of Force "H" from operation RESULT.
(2) The 2 most suitable V's for Freetown.
E. Two Corvettes from Home will proceed to Freetown shortly. (1st S.L. 0138/2).

Yugoslav Neutrality.

From many recent reports now confirmed by RORQUAL'S voyage into North Adriatic it is evident that full use is being made by enemy both of Yugo-Slavian ships and territorial waters. It is for consideration whether very early action could be taken to warn Yugo-Slav Gov. that this must stop and that it is the intention to lay mines off the coast in order to force ships out of territorial waters. It might be suggested that if Yugo-Slavia traffic stops mining may be unnecessary. (C. in C. Med 1245/4 to Adty).

/French.....

French Policy.

Information, graded B.2. There is some reason to believe this information. Begins.

1. The Navy has received orders from Petain to be ready to leave at once for Oran or Algiers, and, if intercepted by the Italian Navy, to make for Alexandria or Gibraltar.

Crews for ships at Alexandria are being got ready for despatch to that port.

There is only sufficient naval fuel oil at Casablanca and Dakar and Toulon for one voyage.

3. All that is possible will be taken to Africa, and ships shall destroy everything useful as they leave Toulon munition stores to be flooded, breech blocks removed, in case of German occupation.

To allow sailing of fleet which is in perfect condition, resistance on land is foreshadowed.

4. Arrangements are being made for French Merchant Vessels to be loaded and fuelled for North Africa. Ends.

Although the above preparations are bieng made they may not be put into effect without orders from Darlan.
(D.N.I. 1649/6 to C. in C. Med).

Troops for Malta.

Following from C's o. S. No 54 for C's in C. Med. and M.E. C. in C. Malta, has asked for urgent reinforcements by two British infantry battalions. Please arrange for despatch from M.E. as soon as practicable. Battalion transport modified scale can follow at first opportunity, but very desirable that bicycles and carriers should accompany troops. Malta state that transport can be extemporised there pending arrival of vehicles. (1. S.L. 1036/7 to C. in C. Med).

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (contd).

JUNO.
GRIFFIN.

Your 1450Z/8. Regret I cannot possibly spare JUNO or GRIFFIN. I have no margin to spare in face of increasing commitments along Lybian Coast and necessity to provide escort for ILLUSTRIOUS to Aden as soon as she can pass Canal.
(C. in C. Med, 0949/9 to C. in C. E.I).

M.T.B's.

Your 2245/28/1. 10th M.T.B. Flotilla being shipped in W.S.6 due to arrive M.E. early April. This will be based at your discretion presumably in Crete. Two additional M.T.B. Flotilla's to be based at Malta are forecast not before late Autumn 1941, all dates having been put back by destruction of nearly a flotilla in Vospers works by bombing.
(Head of M. 1557/10 to C. in C. Med).

Minesweeper Reinforcements.

C. in C. Med's 2331/7 and 2233/13. In view of the situation in the Far East it has been decided that ABERDARE and HARROW are to remain at Singapore and that WIDNES is to remain on East Indies station. Only immediate reinforcements of minesweeping forces that can be sent to Mediterranean must be provided at the expense of the Red Sea escorts. Reduction in Red Sea escorts will have to be accepted and if necessary some unescorted sailings adopted. C. in C. E.I. requested to arrange for transfer to Mediterranean Station forthwith of GRIMSBY and SHOREHAM and subject to concurrence of F.O.C.R.I.N. of INDUS and HINDUSTAN.
(1st S.L. 0116/15 to C. in C. Med., E.I., China, etc).

"Cucumber" Operations.

V.A. Malta's 1418/9, 1608/9 and 0905/13. Desired to continue operations with CUCUMBERS at earliest date possible. If you are unable to send personnel trained from station resources, arrangements can be made to send a T.G.M. from home by air. Desire to avoid this if possible owing to interference with home operations and training.
(D.D.O.D. (M) 1756/15 to C. in C. Med).

/Operations.....

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (contd).

Operations. "Blunt". M.C.8.

Following operations are in progress or intended.

A. ORION AJAX covering passage of A.N. 16 and first Benghazi convoy (A.C. One) both E.T.A. 18/2 Piraeus and Benghazi respectively.

B. YORK BONAVENTURE and destroyers supporting operation BLUNT night of 16/17 until anticipated time of occupation.

C. ORION AJAX and destroyers from Aegean to arrive at Alexandria A.M./19.

D. Commencing on 19th Operation M.C.8 with object the passage of two battalions to Malta in GLOUCESTER, ORION, AJAX and passage of BRECONSHIRE and CLAN MACAULAY Malta to Alexandria. Operation serves to cover passage of A.S. 15.
Force A. BARHAM VALIANT EAGLE leave Alexandria p.m./19 to be about 180 miles North of Benghazi at daylight/21 to meet and cover passage of BRECONSHIRE and CLAN MACAULAY which leave Malta escorted by HAVOCK HOTSPUR p.m./20. COVENTRY will join this convoy a.m./21 if weather permits in her temporary repaired condition.

Force B. GLOUCESTER, AJAX, PERTH, NUBIAN MOHAWK, DIAMOND to arrive Malta a.m./21 disembarking troops and sail p.m/21 for Alexandria, leaving DIAMOND to refit which can be no longer postponed.

E. Commencement of this operation is dependent on punctual arrival of all units at Alexandria on 19th. Weather or another destroyer breakdown may cause postponement.

F. It is essential to start a battleship docking programme during coming dark night period. WARSPITE will be docked first on 21st followed as soon as possible by VALIANT and BARHAM. Hope to get dockings through before next Malta convoy runs in early March.

G. Destroyer situation is particularly difficult with two absent in Red Sea and continual demands for Western Desert escorts and essential convoys to Greece.
(C. in C. Med. 1228/16).

/U.X.B's.....

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (contd).

U.X.B's, Pisa and Leghorn.

Reports received that number of bombs dropped atPisa and Leghorn failed to explode. Can any reason be given?
(1. S.L. 2319/16 to S.O. Force K).

Military Convoy for Greece.

(i) Military planning operation entailing move of four divisions to Greece. Operation requires 15 flights each containing about 8000 personnel 1200 M.T. and 6000 tons of stores.

(ii) Desired to despatch advance party sailing 24/2. Also cases of D M T now in BALUCHISTAN.

(iii) Am utilizing PORT HALIFAX CITY OF WINDSOR (?BRATTDAL) BRAVVDAL and BALUCHISTAN for vehicles and stores. C. in C. Med's concurrence requested.

(iv) Unless C. in C. Med. orders personnel to embark in H.M. SHIPS, COSTA RICA will be used. C. in C. Med. inform S.S.T.O. Egypt accordingly.

(v) C. in C. Med. requested to state whether escort can be arranged for advance party.
(P.S.T.O. Egypt 1247/17 to D. of S.T., C. in C. Med).

LIVERPOOL repairs.

Owing to the uncertain situation in Far East decision to repair LIVERPOOL at Singapore has been cancelled. Request if, on completion of her temporary repairs, she would be considered fit to cross the Atlantic via the Cape.
(V.C.N.S. 2349/17 to C. in C. Med).

Five Ships.

My 1503/30/11/40 para 3. No suitable ships are available in Mediterranean. Request information as to whether OAKFIELD or AR NIZAM are now ready to be steamed out to Eastern Mediterranean also whether satisfactory W/T remote control has been established.
(C. in C. Med, 1658/18 to Admty).

/Tripoli.....

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (contd).

Tripoli "Cucumbers".

Admty 1756/15. Another lay of Cucumbers in Tripoli approaches will be made in next moonlight period. Desired to drop Cucumbers inside harbour as well as in approaches, but close range fire is too intense for dropping below 500 feet. Mines with parachutes are required and a proportion should be fitted with period delay mechanism and possibly one or two with non magnetic device.

Admty. 0110/15/1 and Adty. 1935/10/2, 36 mines for Malta are apparently at Gibraltar. Recommend these be sent to Alexandria for onward shipment. If any mines available in Eastern Meditn. request about a dozen with reasonable life be sent here next opportunity. Hope some parachutes and instructions for fitting can be sent with them and that some have P D M. (V.A. Malta 0650/23 to C. in C. Med).

Mining of Suez Canal.

Situation report. Only 4 of mines dropped in last 2 attacks have been swept. Some evident that a proportion of mines dropped are acoustic. All sweeping by D W I has been abortive because of use of heavily damped mines.

2. Watch organisation is not yet efficient. Middle East are increasing posts but loath to use British Personnel.

3. The situation is (2 corrupt groups) also anxiety. Profound difference between canal problem and that at home is that canal cannot be used at all until every report of a mine being dropped has been fully investigated and object located or report proved without doubt to be false. Traffic could thus be delayed merly by dropping dummies. Canal is too narrow to allow the making of detours by alternative channels to avoid blocking the area nor can it be accepted that sweeping will have exploded all mines in a (group omitted) section owing to (?delayed) action and other devices.

4. At present unless it is certain all mines are accurately located 8 days must be allowed after each attack to cater for delaying action and subsequent sweeping. The marking organisation is thus vital.

/5.....

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME. (contd).

Mining of Suez Canal. (contd).	5. Capital ship channel should be dredged by 25/2 and canal should open about 3/3 but only if there are no further (?successful attacks). (C. in C. Med, 1550/24 to Admty).
Withdrawal from Kastelorizo.	My 0002/26. Owing to continued heavy scale air attack and reinforcements landed by enemy our force in Castelritzo found it necessary to withdraw during the night 27/28 Feb. Force is now returning to Suda Bay. During withdrawal JAGUAR located a ship in inner harbour and fired torpedoes 4 explosions were heard. Subsequently JAGUAR engaged an enemy destroyer and hit her twice but succeeded in escaping. (ii) It is considered desirable to treat this withdrawal as though intention had been to carry out a raid only. No communique has or will be issued out here. (C.in C. Med. 0944/28).

MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

MARCH, 1941.

Glen ships, passage of Canal, Kabret Base.

Owing to susceptibility of Suez Canal to mining essential to pass two Glen ships through to Port Said at first possible opportunity. Third Glen ship would remain in the vicinity of Kabret landing craft base where combined training centre is also situated. Request your proposals observing training of landing craft crew must be (?) pressed on with all speed. (C.in C. Med. 1131/1 to S.O.Force Z).

Aircraft situation.

Your 1854/20/2. (a) para.3. My point is to stress the need for supplying long range fighters as soon as practicable so that like the enemy who are using ME.110 for the purpose, we may be able to provide protection to convoys much further to seaward . An aircraft carrier can only be in one place at a time whilst convoys may be in the Aegean on the way to Malta or off the Libyan coast all simultaneously. All Brewsters are at present grounded for an indefinite period see H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. T. 185 of 6/2 to Air Min.

(b) Para.4(1) I shall welcome these Beauforts. Long range R/C is at present so diminished that I have been unaware of the position of the Italian battle fleet and major units since 16/1.

Para.4 (v) agree that 830 Squadron is doing well but as I have pointed out its short range greatly reduce its value. I had hoped for replacement by Beauforts to allow striking at enemy anywhere from Sardinia to Taranto. Malta squadrons have never yet been at full strength.

(c) Para.5 R.A.F. have one (? squadron) in Benghazi area and no hopes of any more hence the port has had to be given up for any shipping of (? or) H.M.ships.

(d) Para.6. Agree. This was one of the reasons put forward for a long term policy.

/(e)

MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

MARCH, 1941.

Aircraft situation. (Contd.)	Para.8. Agree. It is this formidable drain which is making us so dangerously weak everywhere, in particular in Canal Area Crete and Cyrenaica. (f) The closest contact is maintained with A.O.C. in C. M.E. but no amount of contact will avail when butter is spread too thin. We can only hope every endeavour will be made somehow to get fighters out here for otherwise the price is going to be very heavy, the losses of TERROR and now DAINTY are pointers. (C.in C. Med., 1412/2 to Admty).
Swordfish operations.	Admty's 1726/3/1 to A.O.C. in C. M.E. and C.in C. E.I. C.in C. E.I. has proposed special Swordfish flight should now be moved to Sudan for operations against Massawa if required. Admty are issuing instructions that Massawa is not to be mined. Admty and ourselves suggest that this Unit might now be moved to West Coast of Greece for operations against Italian Adriatic ports or to such other area as you and C.in C. Med., consider suitable. (Air Ministry, 1745/5 to A.O.C.in C. R.A.F. M.E. C.in C. Med.)
Greece.	Situation is as follows. First flight of Lustre Force has now started for Greece, troops in the Cruiser Squadron material in M.T.ships. Movement is continuous, convoys every 3 days. R.A./1 with BARHAM, VALIANT and 6 destroyers left Alexandria a.m./6 for Suda Bay a.m./7 from whence he will cover the convoys movements. 805 Fighter Squadron and rest of 815 T.S.R. Squadron are moving to Malece, Crete where they will be under the operational control of R.A.1. (C.in C. Med., 1028/6 to Admty).

MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

MARCH, 1941.

Bosporus netted.	My 1745/28/2. (?1754/28/2). Bosporus net laid complete except gap approx. half cable wide purposely left open. (N.A. Ankara, 1253/6).
ILLUSTRIOUS LIVERPOOL.	Your 2337/4. ILLUSTRIOUS dependent on passage of canal and provision of escort from Suez Canal to Aden. Regret no destroyer(s) available from here in present circumstances. (?Is) not intended to pass ILLUSTRIOUS South until priority Northbound traffic has been cleared. LIVERPOOL will be progressed whenever dock can be spared and might with luck be ready first week in April. (C.in C. Med., 1047/7 to Admty).
FORMIDABLE EAGLE ILLUSTRIOUS.	FORMIDABLE is moving Lake Timsah with a view to transmitting Northern Section as soon as open. I realise that this involves some risk of her being shut in, in event of further mining but experience shows there is good prospects of at least keeping each part of canal in turn open at intervals. Intend to give EAGLE priority over ILLUSTRIOUS in Timsah Southward and she will (? sail for) Port Said as soon as FORMIDABLE is through canal. No destroyers will be available from Med., Fleet forEAGLE from Suez. (C.in C. Med., 1110/8 to Admty).
Air Raid on Halfar.	N.O.I.C. Malta reports heavy raid by 100 aircraft including 70 bombers on Halfar aerodrome on 5/3. Two Swordfish and one Gladiator written off other Swordfish damaged. All available Hurricanes namely 11 were up and the bag from A/A fire and fighters was 16 confirmed one probable six damaged. This raid and consequent damage to Swordfish has prevented laying CUCUMBERS at Tripoli (Africa). N.O.I.C. Malta points out that the only answer is more fighters in Malta. A.O.C. in C. is doing his best to provide them but you will be

/aware

Air raid on Halfar. (Contd.)

aware his resources in this respect are already overstrained. My anxiety for Malta will be great if enemy can establish an air supremacy over it. The few fighters are doing wonders but Island must be made so that these raids are not worth while to enemy. (C.in C. Med., 1515/7).

Fighter aircraft for Malta.

I wish to draw T.L's attention most urgently to Governor Malta's personal message A.347 to Chief of Air Staff. I have repeatedly represented this matter and lately in my 1515 of 7/3. I must ask T.L. to press for immediate action to reinforce fighter defence Malta. (C.in C. Med., 2011/9).
NOTE: Governor Malta's A.347 is dated 7th March and a copy was passed to C.N.S. (Personal) on 8th March by Air Ministry. Air Ministry X 944 refers.

Eurekas.

Ref: 0901/24 from C.in C. M.E. H.M.S. PRINCE LEOPOLD and PRINCE CHARLES will carry eight Eurekas each in addition to those being shipped direct to Middle East. Expect they will leave U.K. about end of March, proceeding via the Cape and taking approx. two months to reach Middle East. (Head of M. 1246/10 to C.in C's M.E. and Med.)

"Lustre Force".

Your 0750/11. Following is a repetition of first para. of my 1028/6. Begins:- First flight of Lustre Force has now started for Greece, troops in the Cruiser Squadron, material in M.T.ships. The movement is a continuous one, convoys every 3 days. Ends.
(C.in C. Med., 0637/12).

MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

MARCH, 1941.

Salonica Evacuation of shipping.	Request urgent consideration to removal from Salonika now of all craft or as many as possible. This would avoid difficulties that might be experienced if no such action was taken prior to Germany presenting an ultimatum to, or committing an act of, agression against Greece. (Hd. of M., 1538/13 to C.in C. Med.)
ILLUSTRIOUS.	Your 1128/10. Concur that ILLUSTRIOUS should proceed to Port Sudan. C.in C. E.I. requested to sail ship to Durban in accordance with Admty 1332/30/1 as soon as escort can be provided. (D.O.D.(F) 0015/14 to C.in C. Med.)
Salonika evacuation of shipping.	Admty's 1538/13. Re evacuation of shipping from Thrace and Macedonia. Greek Ministry of shipping has agreed that when frontier is broken all craft larger than fishing boats shall be ordered south. This seems more satisfactory than any immediate evacuation which would at once start a panic. Actually we are even now sending ships northward some being to Salonica to left timber, ore, etc. which may not only get away some material but should much hearten the population. I suggest action on this coast and elsewhere must assume Greek resistance to Germany and loyalty to us and hence we must support their morale. Already Navy is preparing repair and store ships with view to mobility and maintenance if forces away from Salamis. (N.A.Athens, 1305/14 to C.in C. Med.) Fully Concur. (C.in C. Med., 1437/16).

MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

MARCH, 1941.

Enemy shipping, Yugoslav territorial waters.	Intelligence indicates Italian shipping using Yugo Slavian territorial waters. Considerable traffic between Bar and Kotor. Bauxite Trade between Dubrovnik Dalmuir and Trieste reported in German ships. Traffic using Korcula Channel and passing west of Hvar Island. You may attack and sink without warning any ships identified as Italian or German whether in Yugoslav. territorial waters or not, except no ships are to be attacked in Yugoslav harbours or anchorages and fire should be withheld if explosion of torpedo on Yugoslav shore would cause damage to property or loss of live. Surface attacks and visit and search are not to be carried out in Yugoslav. territorial waters. For definition of territorial waters see C.B. 3012 para.3. (Capt: S.1. 2232/19 to REGENT etc.)
Battleship strength QUEEN ELIZABETH BARHAM.	Desirable to review question of Mediterranean battleship strength. Italians now have 3 offective battleships and by May, we must expect them to have 4 or even 5 available. On our side, with the through Mediterranean route one of considerable hazard and with spasmodic closing of Canal, time taken to reinforce Eastern Mediterranean is much greater than heretofore. If therefore a capital ship is functioning it is important to be able quickly to replace her, observing only slight damage can be dealt with at Alexandria and even that is dependent on dock being kept intact. A.M. 1251/8/11/1940 stated QUEEN ELIZABETH would be ready to leave U.K. to join this station at end of February, but no further communication has been made. Raider situation obviously makes it of great importance to have capital ships on ocean routes and at the moment no increase of battleship strength in the Mediterranean is necessary, but I feel one battleship should be rather nearer than N.Atlantic.

/Suggest

MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

MARCH, 1941.

Suggest a battleship should be in East Indies or Cape area acting against raider to be available to reinforce me at short notice. An alternative would be to send a battleship into Mediterranean and to send BARHAM to East Indies, in view of comparative short range of BARHAM's guns, her lower speed, and endurance, and serious docking problems she presents.

Gamble in these proposals in case Canal is blocked, but risk can be eccepted. Early action is needed in view of time required before reinforcements could arrive.
(C.in C. Med., 1853/19 to Admty).

Security of Piraeus and Volo.

My Y 4/11 21/2. Security against submarines of Piraeus and Volo is being considered by Greek Admty. Arrangements are being made to reinforce minefields at entrance to these places. At both places boom defences are very weak.
(N.A.Athens, 1540/21).

Reinforcements, Hurricanes, Malta.

12 reinforceing Hurricane II's have been embarked in carrier and if circumstances permit will be flown to Malta about end of March or beginning of April. Fitted with long range tanks and six guns only an would be flown off in daylight about 420 nautical miles from Malta. Following arrangements to be made. (Escort etc).
(Air Ministry, 1725/23 to H.Q.Malta).

F.A.A. Operations.

Your 0251/20. These attacks were carried out under operational control of B.A.F. Greece by 6 Swordfish of 815 Squadron which is based on a very improvised aerodrome at Maleme Crete.
This detachment flew to Eleusis where they picked up torpedoes and thence to Paramythia which has just been completed as an advanced R.A.F. landing ground and attacked were carried out from there.

/2.

MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

MARCH, 1941.

F.A.A. Operations. (Contd.)

2. Torpedoes were shipped to Piraeus charged with small maintenance party and Greek navy rendered every assistance. The whole arrangement is very primitive. It is hoped to repeat operation during coming moon period and to lay CUCUMBERS as well as deliver torpedo attacks on shipping.

3. These operations are typical of offensive coastal command operations I had in mind in paragraphs 3 and 4 of my 2345/19/2 and it will be appreciated how much more could be done with higher performance aircraft.
(C.in C. Med., 1750/24 to Admty).

Air Reinforcements for Malta.

Ref: A.M. X.472 (1725/23) para.4. suggest Sunderlands fly to Gibraltar and proceed from there to R/V which will be ARK ROYAL. Sunderlands wait for aircraft to fly off and form up. Para.5. Route to be from R/V to Galita Island keeping 20 miles from Tunisian Coast thence sighting distance Cape Bon thence on a coast keeping south and outside visibility distance Pantellaria thence to Malta. Para.6. Will arrange periodical met reports as and when required by S.O. Force H.
1850/24.

Submarine Reinforcement.

Proposed to reinforce you immediately by 2 U/Class submarines provided Malta can accommodate them, or alternatively, if operated from Alexandria, suitable advance fuelling bases can be provided. Also proposed to send you CACHALOT. Under consideration to replace O.P. and Class submarines by later classes during the next few months.
D. No other submarine reinforcements available at present.
(Head of M. 2250/25 to C.in C. Med.)

MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

MEDITERRANEAN VOLUME.

MARCH, 1941.

Enemy Operation Anticipated.	Most secret sources reports (a) Large number of heavy German fighters to be at Palermo a.m./25 for special operations (b) 25/3 is day minus 3 (c) R/C of Alexandria - Suda Bay and traffic route Alexandria - Piraeus to be carried out for 2 days before main operation (d) On day of actual operation, intensive reconnaissance of area bounded by coast of Crete, east coast of Greece, Gulf of Athens and line Zea, Milo, Cape Sidero from dawn to noon. Also dawn R/C of route Gavdo - Alexandria and Caso - Alexandria (e) Dawn attack on aerodrome in Crete on day of operation and probably on day preceding it.
	2. My appreciation is that operation is either large scale air attack on convoys or else a surface raid into Aegean. I consider that if we now move out (?large) forces these movements will be seen and operation will only be delayed until fuel obliges return to base. Intend therefore to clear area concerned and so endeavour to make enemy strike into thin air whilst taking all action possible damaging him whilst he is doing so. (C.in C. Med., 1728/26 to V.A.L.F.) Instructions, to follow.
LE TRIUMPHANT LEOPARD.	Owing to defects and limitations of endurance, not yet possible actively to employ large units of Free French Naval Forces in Home Waters. Suggested that LE TRIUMPHANT and LEOPARD when materially fit be employed on active operations against the Italians. Request your views. (Head of M. 1122/27 to C.in C. Med.)
Exchange between FLAMINGO AUCKLAND and GNAT LADYBIRD.	Admty. 2033/27. Although my Destroyers are getting on their last legs I can accept this arrangements for a limited period. Request FLAMINGO and AUCKLAND may be sent as soon as practicable, GNAT was sent to Suez on 21/3. LADYBIRD will be sent as well. (C.in C. Med., 1126/29 to Admty).

MOST SECRET

April 1941.

MEDITERRANEAN

Fiume

Reports from Susak that Italians are evacuating naval material and ships from Fiume presumably in anticipation of outbreak of war with Yugoslavia. Importance of getting into Fiume at first possible moment and getting control of torpedo factory is evident. If it appears likely that Germans might get there first or that town could not be held, is there any possibility or organizing a raid in order completely wreck the factory and instruments so that it will be useless again for producing torpedoes?
(C. in C., Med., 1153/3 to N.A. Belgrade).

Convoys and Enemy Air Action.

Situation report. Convoys for LUSTRE operation as well as normal Aegean convoys have been running according to plan. Scale and efficiency of air attack is however increasing and losses are mounting in proportion.
2. Since 22/3 SOLHEIM, NICHOLAS EMBIRICOS HOMEFIELD, COULOURAS-XENOS, all empty southbound and NORTHERN PRINCE northbound all sunk by enemy air action. TETI and MARIE MAERSK damaged.
3. Meagre fighting protection is provided in the vicinity of Crete by F.A.A and R.A.F. from Maleme and at times by one R.A.F. fighter on approaches to Piraeus but during remainder of voyage our fighters have not requisite range and reliance has to be placed on A.A. defence provided by escort. Scale of this defence cannot be made adequate owing to shortage of suitable A.A. escorts but it is hoped that changes in Red Sea situation may allow reinforcement.
4. Key to the problem is neutralisation of Rhodes. This prospect is however now delayed by Cyrenaican situation nor can Air Force provide sufficiently (? continuous attack to make aerodrome unusable.
5. To sum up we have been fortunate in being able to pass through so much LUSTRE comparatively unmolested but must now expect a higher percentage of losses which may force us to reduce frequency of convoys in order to strengthen their protection.
(C. in C., Med., 1320/4)

MEDITERRANEAN-Contd.

Proposed operation against Zara.	I have been asked to inform you by Yugo Slav Naval Authorities that it is intended to attempt to capture Zara immediately on outbreak of war and to ask if cooperation of British Naval units would be possible to prevent reinforcement by sea. I explained I did not consider it would be possible unless units of the fleet could be established in Yugo Slav waters previous to outbreak of war. However request is forwarded as asked. (Belgrade 1942/4 to C. in C., Med.)
Bombing attacks on Northern Italy.	It seems bombing attacks on Northern Italy would give dividends out of relation to (? weight of) attack and might serve to divert a proportion of enemy aircraft from attack on sea communications. (C. in C. Med., 1339/5.)
Re OLYMPUS	Admty. 1413/4. Is it the intention to operate OLYMPUS from Malta? With arrival of 2 additional "U" Class S/Ms and operating REGENT as suggested in my 2108/2 further commitments of large S/Ms will entail considerable reinforcements of personnel or delay in maintenance while reserves of torpedoes are inadequate. Also serious risk of bomb damage in an already congested base. The enemy must know from our recent submarine successes that these operate from Malta and will soon wish to stamp out this menace. (V.A.Malta 1351/5)
PROTEE	Your 1238/14/3. Re proposal of Admiral Godfroy that PROTEE should be allowed to go to Indo China. First Lord has very grave doubts about the wisdom of releasing from our control any French warship in view of Admiral Darlan's general attitude, even if we lay down condition that submarine shall not leave limits of China Station, this condition is unlikely to be kept by Vichy Govt. if our relations with them seriously deteriorate. Moreover if Indo China is overun by Japanese there will be no guarantee that they will not obtain possession of French Naval units.

/2....

MEDITERRANEAN

PROTEE-Contd.

2. On the other hand in Far East it is in our interests to strengthen European powers as against Japanese. Moreover if we grant this request of Admiral Godfroy it would do much to keep him favourably disposed to us. In the event of Vichy Govt. weakening as against the Germans he may support us.
3. Would welcome your views before reaching decision.
(1st L. 2043/5 to C. in C. Med.)

Yugoslav request for assistance.

Your 1102/10. Yugoslavs have asked for (a) assistance to evacuate high personage (b) Naval assistance in Adriatic.
2. As regards (a) I understand A.O.C. M.E. has arranged to evacuate by air.
3. As regards (b) I repeatedly made it clear throughout the negotiations and staff talks that I could not at present send Naval assistance to Adriatic, in view of my other commitments. I have not however answered these telegrams as there appears no useful purpose in telling Yugoslavians that I can do nothing for them.
(C. in C., Med. 2310/10 to Adty.)

CACHALOT

F.O.(S) 2253Z/22. Intend CACHALOT, after preparing mines at Gibraltar, to proceed to operate in Gulf of Genoa north of 043° 45' N., laying mines as convenient during patrol near Troja Island (042° 47' N., 010° 43' 12" E.)
To return to Alexandria on completion of patrol calling at Malta.
(C. in C., Med. 1106/30 to Capt. (S) 1)

Proposed minelaying operations.

Your 1356/30. While such a barrier may achieve an initial success, the minefields being in water more under control of enemy than ourselves, he will sweep a channel through it, probably close to shore, and subsequently the minefield will hamper our operations more than his.
Request your remarks on this aspect of the operation. Suggest alternatively small minefields fitted with short period flooders laid in track of convoys inside 200 fathom line. Such minefields however would have to be laid in more than 50 fathoms so as not to endanger our submarines as mines on the bottom may remain dangerous after sinking. (V.C.N.S. 1328A/2 to C. in C. Med.)

M.N.B.D.O. Suda Bay.

Request you will inform me for information of Prime Minister date of arrival of M.N.B.D.O. in M.E. its movements since that date and reasons for delay in getting it installed at Suda Bay.
(1st S.L.,0317B/4 to C. in C. Med.)

Delay to M.N.B.D.O.

Your 0317/4 M.N.B.D..O. arrived Suez 24/4 having been nearly 12 weeks on passage from U.K. Store Ship reached Haifa 26/4 and first flight consisting of boom defence AAGuns and crew will sail on 5/5 Delay at Haifa was due to the stowage of M.N.B.D.O. equipment bearing no relation whatever to its employment vide para 9 of Admty. 2335/26. Remainder of M.N.B.D.O. will leave for Crete as soon as AA Guns have been installed. (C. in C. Med., 1258/4 to Admty.)

RORQUAL

Your 1610B/7 RORQUAL sailed three days ago for North (? Aegean) with orders to mine Salonika harbour and operate against shipping off Dardanelles. (? C. in C. Med., 2209/7 to Admty.)

/Turkish....

Turkish ferry-boats.

Following from Admiral Kelly.
Admty. 1736/13. These ferry boats figure prominently in the plans of the G.S. for evacuating Turkish forces from Thrace to Anatolia (?in case of) German advance and interference with their movements would have bad effect.
When the seven arrive Suez if they were required for an immediate and specific operation it might be possible to arrange for loan over a short period of few of them not more than four.
2. Not as a parallel but as an example intimate friend of Enver told me that the Turkish German treaty was signed the day we took over AGINCOURT and ERIN.
3. My friend was Captain of ERIN.
(N.A. Angora 1801/15 to C. in C. Med.)

Air R/C

I wish most urgently to bring to your notice air R/C situation out here.
Consequent on presence of enemy long range fighters in Greece and Sicily it is no longer possible to use Sunderlands. The alternative is land R/C machines, but A.O.C. in C. has not one single machine capable of long distance R/C with exception of one Maryland at present unserviceable but which it is hoped may be ready soon.
Also hoped Glen Martins at Malta may be able to cover Ionian Sea to some extent.
I am thus at this critical juncture entirely without bulk of R/C to cover approaches to Crete and to give me timely information of movement of any enemy sea borne expedition, nor can I obtain information of what is going on in Aegean.
Vital importance of remedying this situation is evident. It appears to me immediately necessary to call out (@) to Egypt via Malta R/C aircraft, and that aircraft should come with fully trained crews so that they are ready for immediate operation. Crete aerodromes are not available in present condition for R/C aircraft. Carrier borne aircraft cannot do this work owing to their low speed and range but even if this were not so, fact that only 8 fighters are serviceable would preclude use of aircraft carriers on this duty. (C. in C. Med. 1807C/15 to Admty.)

/Minelaying....

May 1941.

Minelaying Operations MAT 1,2.	ABDIEL is to carry out one of the following minelaying operations. MAT One Line A. From 225° Mar Makra Point 038° 30' N., 020° 40' E. (? skirting) 1 mile in direction 350° for 4 miles. Line B From 250° Cape Dukato 1 mile in direction 155° for 4 miles. MAT Two. Line A. From 090° Phrango Point 036° 27' N., 022° 59' E., 1 mile in direction 200° for 4 miles. Line B. From 000° Cape Spathi 1.1 miles in direction 329° for 4 miles. Date and details will be signalled later (C. in C. Med. 1355C/17 to ABDIEL)
Disposition of Submarines.	My 0948/12/4. With German occupation of Greece situation in Eastern Med. has changed considerably. In addition to vital need of stopping reinforcements to Tripoli (Africa) which is undertaken by "U" Class from Malta, and Benghazi patrols supplied from Alexandria it has now become necessary to provide patrol in Aegean area. 2. Areas requiring attention are (a) Dardanelles (b) Gulf of Athens or Doro Channel (c) If possible Kithera Channel-Cape Matapan area. Submarines can therefore no longer be spared from here for Western Med. Intend to retain PARTHIAN and PERSEUS at Alexandria. REGENT should return as soon as defects are complete. Request that OSIRIS, OTIS and PROTEUS may be sent as soon as possible, PARTHIAN being released for silencing refit on arrival of PROTEUS. PANDORA to refit in accordance with Admty 1752/21/4. 3. This would eventually build up 1st S/M F. at Alexandria to 13 submarines with which effort would be made to provide a patrol in fruitful area off Calabria in addition to those given above. 4. At same time it is very desirable if any submarines can be spared that some submarine operations should be undertaken on West coast of Italy if only Sporadic. (C. in C. Med. 1734/16 to Admty.)

/Syria.....

MOST SECRET

May 1941.

Syria,
German Air
Menace.

I have read Admty. 1457/17 with great concern. Situation in the Mediterranean still does not appear to be fully realised. We are fighting a battle against the German Air Force in which we are barely holding our own. Our losses in merchant ships and smaller war vessels have been very serious indeed, for we have neither the aircraft protection nor the A.A. resources to cope with the enemy scale of attack. As regards enemy mining, Malta is frequently closed, the canal has been closed for nine days, and was mined again last night before moonrise, and we are just able to keep Tobruk open. Our losses in minesweeping craft due to mines and air attack are such that the reinforcements so far received do not provide resources anything like sufficient to meet requirements on this large station where the mining threat is only beginning to develop.

2. I am now asked to send assistance to the East Indies from these slender resources and while I realise that any immediate assistance must come from the Mediterranean there is no proposal or suggestion for replacing what is taken away. I am fully aware of the importance of Red Sea and Shatt-el-Arab but that fact does not minimise the vital need of keeping open the canal and Mediterranean Ports.

3. Suggest decision given in Admty. 2322/14 be reversed and the four HUNT Class sent immediately either to Red Sea or Mediterranean to replace sloops if these have been surrendered. I also request every possible step to augment the sweeping strength both in Mediterranean and Red Sea and that sweepers for the latter be provided from reinforcements arriving and not from Mediterranean resources. In particular I think it is folly to move the D.W.I. aircraft who have accounted for more mines in the Canal than any other method and which are particularly suited for sweeping in these narrow waters.
(C. in C. Med. 1329C/19 to Admty.)

/Syria....

Syria and Free French.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No 122 to Cs in C Mediterranean and Middle East. (Begins) Defence Committee this morning considered General Wavell's O/65504 and O/65499 of 19/5. They agreed that Catroux's request that Free French troops should be moved at once to frontier opposite Derna should be granted forthwith and that if situation appears favourable to him (Catroux) he should have authority to advance into Syria.
Considered opportunity is too good to miss, and advance must be regarded as a political coup, in which time is all important, rather than as a military operation. You should do everything you can to give Catroux as much military and air support as possible.
Defence committee approved immediate issue of Free French declaration of independence of Syria and Lebanon to be backed by H.M.G. (1st S.L. 1529/20 to C. in C. Med.)

Relations with Vichy.

If hostilities with Vichy break they are likely to begin without formal declaration. Even without actual hostilities Vichy co-operation with the enemy may reach such a pitch that your agreement with Admi. Godfroy must be considered abrogated. It may thus be necessary to take action before (g) of your 2035/7/7/40 occurs. You will therefore be kept informed of any deterioration in our relations with Vichy in order that you may bring to instant readiness your plans to prevent escape or scuttling of French warships. (Hd. of M. Approved by 1st Lord, 2007B/22 to C. in C. Med.)

Cruisers

To replace cruiser losses it is under consideration to send to Mediterranean either AURORA and GALATEA or SHEFFIELD and EDINBURGH. Ships have following H.A. armament and R.D.F.
Dates of arrival of these ships at Gibraltar could be as follows:
EDINBURGH 27/5, SHEFFIELD 31/5, AURORA and GALATEA about 1/6.
LATONA has been ordered to Gibraltar and will land Oerlikon guns there for these ships.
Proposed that ships to join you should mount the maximum number of Oerlikon

/Guns....

Cruisers -Contd.	guns possible at Gibraltar in the hope that this may enable them to operate in the dive bomber area with comparative success. If you have no decided preference we should prefer to retain EDINBURGH and SHEFFIELD as they would be more use on trade routes. (1st S.L., 0021B/24 to C. in C. Med.)
Iraq-Syria Oil Supplies.	Following from Chiefs of Staff No 114 for Cs in C. Med. and M.E. Unless you see any grave objections you are authorised to destroy forthwith oil refinery at Alwind and the four pumping stations between Haditha and Tripoli. (i.e. T.1, T.2, T.3 and T.4). This action will not deprive us of our supplies and will ensure that even if Germans occupy Iraq and Syria they cannot profit by the oil resources there for at least some time. (1st S.L., 1506B/24 to C. in C. Med.)
Greek Cypher & Code	Your 1300/20. Greek cypher and code must be considered compromised but special recoding tables are being prepared locally and will be issued shortly. (C. in C. Med. 2353C/27)
Replacement of Losses. Personnel.	May be possible to obtain destroyers from American Navy to replace losses and perhaps some additional ones as well. We have just received ten C.G. Cutters from U.S.A. and cannot from our resources at home man any more ships from them at present. It will greatly help if you will let us know approx. numbers of officers and men you can send back to U.K. in next few weeks. Higher seamen, communication and Engine Room ratings most urgently required. Spare untrained ratings not wanted at home. (1st S.L. 2356B/28 to C. in C. Med.)

/Mining.....

MOST SECRET

May 1941.

Mining of Suz Canal.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No 122 for C's in C. Med. and M.E. Begins.
1. W.O. and Ministry of War Transport are concerned at reduction of port capacity for imports into Egypt consequent on frequent and lengthy closures of Suez Canal. If these continue it is estimated little more than half total requirements of our forces and needs of civil population in Egypt can be imported.
2. We realise that considerable development has already been made at Suez and that measures to protect Canal against aerial mining are being continuously improved.
3. Ministries concerned are consulting on possible measures of further port development but this would be long-term policy and could not give immediate relief.
4. Meanwhile we should welcome your views on any measures which could be taken now or later to (a) increase defence of Canal area against mining (b) reduce time taken to clear Canal after mines have been dropped. Ends.(1st S.L. 1041B/30 to C. in C. Med.)

Iraq-Syria Oil Supplies

Following from Chiefs of Staff No 120 for C's in C Med. and M.E. Begins.
Would it not be wise now, while you have the chance to destroy pumping stations T.1. - T.4. on the Tripoli line which would be of no value to Iraq and might be of great value to Germans.
2. While realising political implications of destroying Alwend, Chiefs of Staff are gravely anxious lest this should be left too late. Could not requirements of a friendly Iraq be supplied from Abadan? Ends. (1st S.L. 1043B/30 to C. in C. Med.)

Syria

Your 2340/24 to Admiralty only. Syria is now regarded as enemy occupied territory for all purposes of economic warfare, and an Order to this effect is being issued. All ships proceeding to and from Syria, without your authority, should therefore, when possible, be either sent into a port under British control, or, sunk in accordance with Admty. 2247B/15.

/2.....

Syria -Contd.

2. Syrian territorial waters may be disregarded for either purpose, but it must be borne in mind that the French Govt. have in the past given notice that British warships, which approach within 20 miles of French coasts, render themselves liable to attack.
(V.C.N.S. 1045B/30 to C. in C. Med.)

Mosul.

Following from Chiefs of Staff to C's in C. Med. and M.E. (Repeated C. in C. India)
No. 123.
Begins. We have firm indications that Germans are now concentrating large army and air forces against Russia.
2. Under this threat they will probably demand concessions most injurious to us. If the Russians refuse the Germans will march.
3. Russian resistance may be strongly influenced if they think that, should they submit to Germans, we shall attack Baku oil.
4. If we are to use this threat to exert pressure on Russians we must control Mosul before Russians and/or Germans can forestall us.
5. Most energetic action should therefore be taken to get control on Mosul. Can you devise method to achieve this? Small air-borne force might suffice. Ends.
(1st S.L. 2221B/1 to C. in C. Med.)

Defence of Tobruk.

Chiefs of Staff No. 140 for C. in C. Med., C. in C. M.E. Reference C. in C. M.E.O/76675 dated 26/6, para 10 (c).
Any action taken to withdraw even part of garrison of Tobruk now might have far reaching effects on future plan of operations in the Western Desert. We therefore think that except in emergency no such action ought to be taken until a decision on broadest lines as to future campaign has been arrived at and confirmed at home. (Admty. 1441B/27 to C. in C. Med.)

Swordfish minelaying, Tripoli Benghazi.

2052 G.M.T./1. In order to interrupt shipping on Tripoli Benghazi route, four Swordfish 830 Sqn. F.A.A. laid 4 Cucumbers in line N. to S. at 75 yard intervals in 33.56' N. 14.23' E. Moon was obscured through operation. No opposition encountered. All Swordfish returned safely. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 0630/2 to H.Q. R.A.F. M.E.)

Supplies for Malta.

Consider supplying of Malta from Egypt is for the present impracticable by ordinary method of ships in convoy. I intend running a shuttle service with S/M's however for essentials. It appears that it might be possible to run in convoy from Gibraltar observing that air concentrations west of Malta are now relatively small. The chief danger will be that of mines in the Narrows. As Malta's need will become rapidly urgent suggest that this proposal should be given immediate consideration. It might also be possible to get the four 14 knot ships and BRECONSHIRE out to Gibraltar during one of these operations or perhaps during "Tracer". If situation becomes critical suggest consideration be given to using CLYDE and SEVERN from Gibraltar as well for supplies. (C. in C. Med. 1129C/2 to Admty.)

Demonstrations off Western Italy.

During present weakened state of Mediterranean Fleet and until a higher degree of air protection is available we shall find it difficult to operate in Central Mediterranean. Enemy may appreciate this and in consequence the Italian Fleet may become inconveniently active. It appears therefore that any steps possible to contain a proportion of Italian units by directing attention to their Western seaboard will be of value. Operations "Rocket" and "Tracer" will doubtless have this effect to some extent and any other demonstrations that appear feasible might assist in this connection. (C. in C. Med. 2345B/2 to Admty.)

/Greek .....

Greek Fleet. Admiral Sakellariou proposes that AVEROFF, six destroyers, one submarine and repair ship should sail to India where he hopes they can refit and have asdic gear fitted. This would leave three T/Bs, four submarines and one accommodation ship at Alexandria.
Real reason behind this is low morale and lack of wish to fight on following loss of Greece and Crete. I am afraid these ships are going to be of little use to us in Mediterranean; anxiety that they will slip back to Greece when at sea.
I have informed the Admiral that I have no objection to the ships going through to Suez now, but that they must there await H.M.G. decision on policy. One would like to propose that since the majority of crews really want to go home we should be glad to release them and take over the ships but, anyhow at present, it does not appear possible to make such a proposal, as the Admiral will not admit what I suspect to be the reasons underlying his proposals. (C. in C. Med., 2358C/2 to Admty.)

Swordfish Minelaying Operation, Tripoli Benghazi. Your 2228C/2. Confirmation, Observation, and secret source reports emphasized enemy was using Khoms and Zuara for unloading supplies and that traffic was proceeding very close in shore.
In view of this and necessity for quick action, these mines were laid at my request to assist S/M operations, as a sinking close in shore should drive enemy shipping further out where S/Ms can deal with them. Experience of UNBEATEN reported in S.O. S/Ms Malta's 0511B/23/5 showed great difficulty small S/Ms encountered in attacking enemy vessels close in shore. The mines were laid where a fairly accurate fix could be obtained and where they should not in any way interfere with S/M operations. (V.A. Malta, 1445B/3 to C. in C. Med.)

Suez Canal protection against mining. Proposals.
(5) Salvage equipment is inadequate. Strongly recommend that sufficient plant should be despatched to Suez forthwith. (C. in C. Med. 1947/3 to Admty.)

A/C in Middle East. Your 0026C/2 to A.O.C. in C.M.E.
So far as we know the following forces specialised in Naval reconnaissance are now in M.E.
Malta - 7 I.E. Marylands.
Egypt - 16 I.E. Marylands G.R. plus 10 Blenheim G.R. now on passage to you to replace part of present Sunderland Squadrons.
1 Flight of Single Engine and one Flight of twin-engine PRU aircraft.

/After .....

A/C in Middle East - contd.

After consultation with A.O.C. in C.M.E. please let me know if these together with day to day assistance from other types are considered adequate.
For your information there are 50 Marylands now on passage to M.E. and there will then be a gap before the Baltimores which replace the Marylands come into production. (1st S.L. 1954B/5 to C. in C. Med.)

Iraq Oil demolitions.

Chiefs of Staff No.126 to Cs. in C. M.E. and Med., with reference to C. in C.M.E.O/69888 of 5/6. Defence Committee regard denial of Iraq oil to Germany as of paramount importance. Political or other considerations cannot be allowed to delay immediate action being taken when orders are received from here. 2. Preparations should be pressed on for greatest possible destruction of Kirkuk and Mosul oilfields and pipe lines both to Tripoli and Haifa. In making preparations no regard need be had for the future of the fields. Report arrangements contemplated and how long plan will take to put into effect. (1st S.L. 1355B/6 to C. in C. Med.)

Supplies for Malta.

Your 1122C/8 and S.O. Force H's 1137/4.
(1) For the moment the route westward from Malta may be less subject to air attack. I consider after Crete the enemy will soon increase again air forces in Sicily. In addition, danger from mines is great. Though single submarines have so far been lucky in passing on a constricted route, I doubt if Merchant vessels could do so with any degree of safety. Enemy cruisers or destroyers and E boats operate almost continuously to westward, making the route vulnerable to surface ship attacks and necessitating strong escort. If convoy is to pass Pantellaria in dark it must leave Malta before noon and is open to being sighted by the enemy's continuous air patrol.
(2) Consider route eastward still better. If a 14 knots convoy sails under cover of low visibility in a moonless period it would have a good chance of reaching longitude 023° E. unobserved at dawn D.3 and BRECONSHIRE alone should reach longitude 025° 30' E. If surface force and air escort met ships at dawn D.3 there should be a good chance of convoy arriving safe.
(3) If fast convoy got through successfully the slower tankers might be sailed similarly later.
(V.A. Malta, 1036B/8 to C. in C. Med.)

/Alexandria .....

MOST SECRET.

June 1941.

Alexandria, reprisal raids.

Your 1354/8. Not possible to carry out air raids on Italian towns by aircraft from this country until the nights get considerably longer and we cannot afford to carry out retaliatory raids of this nature from M.E. in view of the limited number of bombers at present available for more urgent purposes. (1st S.L. 0117B/10 to C. in C. Med.)

Supplies for Malta.

V.A. Malta's 1038B 8 para. (ii) do not concur. It is evident that existing situation in Eastern Mediterranean is not fully appreciated by V.A. Malta. (C. in C. Med. 1031C/11 to Admty.)

Malta Convoys.

Your 0822B/11. Difficulty of operating in Central Mediterranean does not now arise from Sicilyan Air Forces but inflexible situation of the Fleet which is at present pinned to Eastern Med. by lack of reserves and cannot consequently offer necessary cover or A.A. protection in Central Med. for passage of convoys. This precludes the Eastward passage of convoys from Malta. Para.4. In this case suggest you undertake completion to repairs to ENCOUNTER. (C. in C. Med. 1128C/12 to V.A. Malta.)

Reconn. Aircraft, Middle East.

Your 1954B/5. In near future the R.A.F. hope to have in Egypt one G.R. Blenheim squadron one P.R.U. flight which has to work for all 3 services and half a squadron G.R. Marylands with long range tanks.
(2) At present only 4 long range G.R. Marylands and 4 Sunderlands in Egypt and 7 Marylands at Malta.
(3) Clear my reconnaissance requirements cannot be met by either (1) or (2) above.
(4) To fulfil requirements there should be 2 squadrons G.R. aircraft at Malta, but limitation of space prevents more or even a different allocation of air effort from Malta.
(5) Malta can therefore do little more than search for convoys with an occasional observation of Italian harbours.
(6) Therefore necessary to increase numbers which can operate from African Coast and a total of 4 Squadrons of 16 i.e. A/C each is necessary.
(7) That such a large air effort should be tied down to reconnaissance only is unreasonable. Suggested that A/C allocated capable of bombing and readily convertible.
(8) Essential that the Marylands should be provided with long range tanks. Presumed the 50 Marylands mentioned in your 1954B/5 are so fitted.
(9) This telegram should be read in conjunction with my 0026/2 which deals with general question of aircraft for fleet co-operation.
(C. in C. Med. 1310C/12 to Admty.)

/Malta .....

Malta Garrison.

Comments on Malta cable GM/16656.
Malta's scale of defence for size of Island already exceeds both in infantry and A.A. anything we had available in Crete or can contemplate for Cyprus. British battalions are especially valuable here. Defence of aerodromes, especially in Western Desert where R.A.F. are at present using 14, is most burdensome commitment. Does Dobbie regard these battalions as absolutely vital? You realise that at present it is practically impossible to send convoy to Malta. (C. in C.M.E. No T.O.O./13 to W.O.)

Employment of Wellingtons.

Chiefs of Staff No. 151 for Cs in C. Med. and M.E. Ref. C. in C. Med's 2355C/13.
Wellingtons are being sent to M.E. in as large numbers and as fast as possible. Their employment either at Malta or in Western Desert is a matter for decision by Cs in C. in consultation, but Chiefs of Staff consider that the policy must be to concentrate on BATTLEAXE. Tripoli seems too distant to affect the immediate issue of BATTLEAXE. (1st S.L. 2353B/14 to C. in C. Med.)

Chiefs of Staff No. 154 for Cs. in C. Med. and M.E.
From latest information, it looks as though we will be forced back on the defensive on Libyan front. If so, you would probably think it right to switch reinforcements to Syria with a view to making a good and quick job of "Exporter".
2. Apart from this, request your appreciation of general situation in M.E., with particular reference to (a) Policy at Tobruk. (b) Policy at Cyprus. (c) Reinforcement and provisioning of Malta. As regards (c) we are examining possibilities of doing this through Western Mediterranean. (Ends) (1st S.L. 1344B/18 to C. in C. Med.)

Fighters and PARTHIAN. French Warships, Beirut.

F.A.A. Fighter Squadron leaves for Palestine today (?with) fighters urgently required for your force. PARTHIAN is being sent to operate off Beirut. French warships are probably one of the main stays of defence and should be harried relentlessly by your force backed if possible by day bombing by A.O.C. and at night by F.A.A. If kept continually on the run I feel they will soon depart or be destroyed. I am not in favour of minelaying as it restricts our operation. Do not consider that shore batteries should unduly worry you. Guns are not modern and can be out ranged. If fixed fire on your Squadron you should retaliate regardless of damage to surrounding domiciles. (C. in C. Med. 1200C/20 to C.S. 15.)

/Policy .....

MOST SECRET.

June 1941.

Policy. Following from C.O.S. to C. in C. Med. and C. in C. M.E. Ref. C. in C. M.E's No.1520 cipher 23/6/41. We are still in dark as regards policy you recommend in relation Tobruk. When can we expect this. Would also like something further as to your views on general situation in M.E. (1st S.L. 1520B/25.)

Proposed Operations. Preoccupation of Germany with Russia and consequent reduction of G.A.R. in Med. and particularly in Sardinia and Syracuse presents situation more favourable than likely to recur for some time. Wish to take advantage to pass in convoy to Malta from eastward and to bring out the ships now detained. In conjunction, it might be possible to bring off observation.
2. Present strength of Mediterranean Fleet is inadequate to undertake such operations of this nature without running grave risk consequent on damage incurred.
Operation (corrupt group) of being left with insufficient strong force to prevent the Italian Fleet entering the Eastern Med.
Before initiating plans necessary to know if it is intended to reinforce the battleship strength since WARSPITE and BARHAM cannot be (corrupt group) till at least the end of August by which time the opportunity may have been let slip.
I shall also be glad to know (word omitted ?when) my destroyers can be brought up to strength.
If four HUNT and the remaining "N" class destroyers are sent this should suffice alwgys provided they (word omitted ?arrive) in time.
(C. in C. Med. 14220/26 to Admty.)

Proposed minelaying operations.

Your 1356/30. While such a barrier may achieve an initial success, the minefields being in water more under control of enemy than ourselves, he will sweep a channel through it, probably close to shore, and subsequently the minefield will hamper our operations more than his.
Request your remarks on this aspect of the operation. Suggest alternatively small minefields fitted with short period flooders laid in track of convoys inside 200 fathom line. Such minefields however would have to be laid in more than 50 fathoms so as not to endanger our submarines as mines on the bottom may remain dangerous after sinking. (V.C.N.S. 1328A/2 to C. in C. Med.)

M.N.B.D.O. Suda Bay.

Request you will inform me for information of Prime Minister date of arrival of M.N.B.D.O. in M.E. its movements since that date and reasons for delay in getting it installed at Suda Bay.
(1st S.L.,0317B/4 to C. in C. Med.)

Delay to M.N.B.D.O.

Your 0317/4 M.N.B.D..O. arrived Suez 24/4 having been nearly 12 weeks on passage from U.K. Store Ship reached Haifa 26/4 and first flight consisting of boom defence AAGuns and crew will sail on 5/5 Delay at Haifa was due to the stowage of M.N.B.D.O. equipment bearing no relation whatever to its employment vide para 9 of Admty. 2335/26. Remainder of M.N.B.D.O. will leave for Crete as soon as AA Guns have been installed. (C. in C. Med., 1258/4 to Admty.)

RORQUAL

Your 1610B/7 RORQUAL sailed three days ago for North (? Aegean) with orders to mine Salonika harbour and operate against shipping off Dardanelles. (? C. in C. Med., 2209/7 to Admty.)

/Turkish....

MOST SECRET

May 1941.

Turkish ferry-boats.

Following from Admiral Kelly.
Admty. 1736/13. These ferry boats figure prominently in the plans of the G.S. for evacuating Turkish forces from Thrace to Anatolia (?in case of) German advance and interference with their movements would have bad effect.
When the seven arrive Suez if they were required for an immediate and specific operation it might be possible to arrange for loan over a short period of few of them not more than four.
2. Not as a parallel but as an example intimate friend of Enver told me that the Turkish German treaty was signed the day we took over AGINCOURT and ERIN.
3. My friend was Captain of ERIN.
(N.A. Angora 1801/15 to C. in C. Med.)

Air R/C

I wish most urgently to bring to your notice air R/C situation out here. Consequent on presence of enemy long range fighters in Greece and Sicily it is no longer possible to use Sunderlands. The alternative is land R/C machines, but A.O.C. in C. has not one single machine capable of long distance R/C with exception of one Maryland at present unserviceable but which it is hoped may be ready soon.
Also hoped Glen Martins at Malta may be able to cover Ionian Sea to some extent.
I am thus at this critical juncture entirely without bulk of R/C to cover approaches to Crete and to give me timely information of movement of any enemy sea borne expedition, nor can I obtain information of what is going on in Aegean.
Vital importance of remedying this situation is evident. It appears to me immediately necessary to call out (@) to Egypt via Malta R/C aircraft, and that aircraft should come with fully trained crews so that they are ready for immediate operation. Crete aerodromes are not available in present condition for R/C aircraft. Carrier borne aircraft cannot do this work owing to their low speed and range but even if this were not so, fact that only 8 fighters are serviceable would preclude use of aircraft carriers on this duty. (C. in C. Med. 1807C/15 to Admty.)

/Minelaying....

Minelaying Operations MAT 1,2.

ABDIEL is to carry out one of the following minelaying operations. MAT One Line A. From 225° Mar Makra Point 038° 30' N., 020° 40' E. (? skirting) 1 mile in direction 350° for 4 miles. Line B From 250° Cape Dukato 1 mile in direction 155° for 4 miles.
MAT Two. Line A. From 090° Phrango Point 036° 27' N., 022° 59' E., 1 mile in direction 200° for 4 miles. Line B. From 000° Cape Spathi 1.1 miles in direction 329° for 4 miles.
Date and details will be signalled later (C. in C. Med. 1355C/17 to ABDIEL)

Disposition of Submarines.

My 0948/12/4. With German occupation of Greece situation in Eastern Med. has changed considerably. In addition to vital need of stopping reinforcements to Tripoli (Africa) which is undertaken by "U" Class from Malta, and Benghazi patrols supplied from Alexandria it has now become necessary to provide patrol in Aegean area.
2. Areas requiring attention are (a) Dardanelles (b) Gulf of Athens or Doro Channel (c) If possible Kithera Channel-Cape Matapan area. Submarines can therefore no longer be spared from here for Western Med. Intend to retain PARTHIAN and PERSEUS at Alexandria. REGENT should return as soon as defects are complete. Request that OSIRIS, OTIS and PROTEUS may be sent as soon as possible, PARTHIAN being released for silencing refit on arrival of PROTEUS. PANDORA to refit in accordance with Admty 1752/21/4.
3. This would eventually build up 1st S/M F. at Alexandria to 13 submarines with which effort would be made to provide a patrol in fruitful area off Calabria in addition to those given above.
4. At same time it is very desirable if any submarines can be spared that some submarine operations should be undertaken on West coast of Italy if only Sporadic.
(C. in C. Med. 1734/16 to Admty.)

/Syria.....

MOST SECRET

May 1941.

Syria,
German Air
Menace.

I have read Admty. 1457/17 with great concern. Situation in the Mediterranean still does not appear to be fully realised. We are fighting a battle against the German Air Force in which we are barely holding our own. Our losses in merchant ships and smaller war vessels have been very serious indeed, for we have neither the aircraft protection nor the A.A. resources to cope with the enemy scale of attack. As regards enemy mining, Malta is frequently closed, the canal has been closed for nine days, and was mined again last night before moonrise, and we are just able to keep Tobruk open. Our losses in minesweeping craft due to mines and air attack are such that the reinforcements so far received do not provide resources anything like sufficient to meet requirements on this large station where the mining threat is only beginning to develop.

2. I am now asked to send assistance to the East Indies from these slender resources and while I realise that any immediate assistance must come from the Mediterranean there is no proposal or suggestion for replacing what is taken away. I am fully aware of the importance of Red Sea and Shatt-el-Arab but that fact does not minimise the vital need of keeping open the canal and Mediterranean Ports.

3. Suggest decision given in Admty. 2322/14 be reversed and the four HUNT Class sent immediately either to Red Sea or Mediterranean to replace sloops if these have been surrendered. I also request every possible step to augment the sweeping strength both in Mediterranean and Red Sea and that sweepers for the latter be provided from reinforcements arriving and not from Mediterranean resources. In particular I think it is folly to move the D.W.I. aircraft who have accounted for more mines in the Canal than any other method and which are particularly suited for sweeping in these narrow waters.
(C. in C. Med. 1329C/19 to Admty.)

/Syria....

MOST SECRET

May 1941

Syria and Free French.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No 122 to Cs in C Mediterranean and Middle East. (Begins) Defence Committee this morning considered General Wavell's O/65504 and O/65499 of 19/5. They agreed that Catroux's request that Free French troops should be moved at once to frontier opposite Derna should be granted forthwith and that if situation appears favourable to him (Catroux) he should have authority to advance into Syria.
Considered opportunity is too good to miss, and advance must be regarded as a political coup, in which time is all important, rather than as a military operation. You should do everything you can to give Catroux as much military and air support as possible.
Defence committee approved immediate issue of Free French declaration of independence of Syria and Lebanon to be backed by H.M.G. (1st S.L. 1529/20 to C. in C. Med.)

Relations with Vichy.

If hostilities with Vichy break they are likely to begin without formal declaration. Even without actual hostilities Vichy co-operation with the enemy may reach such a pitch that your agreement with Admi. Godfroy must be considered abrogated. It may thus be necessary to take action before (g) of your 2035/7/7/40 occurs. You will therefore be kept informed of any deterioration in our relations with Vichy in order that you may bring to instant readiness your plans to prevent escape or scuttling of French warships. (Hd. of M. Approved by 1st Lord, 2007B/22 to C. in C. Med.)

Cruisers

To replace cruiser losses it is under consideration to send to Mediterranean either AURORA and GALATEA or SHEFFIELD and EDINBURGH. Ships have following H.A. armament and R.D.F.
Dates of arrival of these ships at Gibraltar could be as follows:
EDINBURGH 27/5, SHEFFIELD 31/5, AURORA and GALATEA about 1/6.
LATONA has been ordered to Gibraltar and will land Oerlikon guns there for these ships.
Proposed that ships to join you should mount the maximum number of Oerlikon

/Guns....

Cruisers -Contd.	guns possible at Gibraltar in the hope that this may enable them to operate in the dive bomber area with comparative success. If you have no decided preference we should prefer to retain EDINBURGH and SHEFFIELD as they would be more use on trade routes. (1st S.L., 0021B/24 to C. in C. Med.)
Iraq-Syria Oil Supplies.	Following from Chiefs of Staff No 114 for Cs in C. Med. and M.E. Unless you see any grave objections you are authorised to destroy forthwith oil refinery at Alwind and the four pumping stations between Haditha and Tripoli. (i.e. T.1, T.2, T.3 and T.4). This action will not deprive us of our supplies and will ensure that even if Germans occupy Iraq and Syria they cannot profit by the oil resources there for at least some time. (1st S.L., 1506B/24 to C. in C. Med.)
Greek Cypher & Code	Your 1300/20. Greek cypher and code must be considered compromised but special recoding tables are being prepared locally and will be issued shortly. (C. in C. Med. 2353C/27)
Replacement of Losses. Personnel.	May be possible to obtain destroyers from American Navy to replace losses and perhaps some additional ones as well. We have just received ten C.G. Cutters from U.S.A. and cannot from our resources at home man any more ships from them at present. It will greatly help if you will let us know approx. numbers of officers and men you can send back to U.K. in next few weeks. Higher seamen, communication and Engine Room ratings most urgently required. Spare untrained ratings not wanted at home. (1st S.L. 2356B/28 to C. in C. Med.)

/Mining.....

Mining of Suz Canal.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No 122 for C's in C. Med. and M.E. Begins.
1. W.O. and Ministry of War Transport are concerned at reduction of port capacity for imports into Egypt consequent on frequent and lengthy closures of Suez Canal. If these continue it is estimated little more than half total requirements of our forces and needs of civil population in Egypt can be imported.
2. We realise that considerable development has already been made at Suez and that measures to protect Canal against aerial mining are being continuously improved.
3. Ministries concerned are consulting on possible measures of further port development but this would be long-term policy and could not give immediate relief.
4. Meanwhile we should welcome your views on any measures which could be taken now or later to (a) increase defence of Canal area against mining (b) reduce time taken to clear Canal after mines have been dropped. Ends.(1st S.L. 1041B/30 to C. in C. Med.)

Iraq-Syria Oil Supplies

Following from Chiefs of Staff No 120 for C's in C Med. and M.E. Begins.
Would it not be wise now, while you have the chance to destroy pumping stations T.1. - T.4. on the Tripoli line which would be of no value to Iraq and might be of great value to Germans.
2. While realising political implications of destroying Alwend, Chiefs of Staff are gravely anxious lest this should be left too late. Could not requirements of a friendly Iraq be supplied from Abadan? Ends. (1st S.L. 1043B/30 to C. in C. Med.)

Syria

Your 2340/24 to Admiralty only. Syria is now regarded as enemy occupied territory for all purposes of economic warfare, and an Order to this effect is being issued. All ships proceeding to and from Syria, without your authority, should therefore, when possible, be either sent into a port under British control, or, sunk in accordance with Admty. 2247B/15.

/2.....

Syria -Contd.

2. Syrian territorial waters may be disregarded for either purpose, but it must be borne in mind that the French Govt. have in the past given notice that British warships, which approach within 20 miles of French coasts, render themselves liable to attack.
(V.C.N.S. 1045B/30 to C. in C. Med.)

Mosul.

Following from Chiefs of Staff to C's in C. Med. and M.E. (Repeated C. in C. India)
No. 123.
Begins. We have firm indications that Germans are now concentrating large army and air forces against Russia.
2. Under this threat they will probably demand concessions most injurious to us. If the Russians refuse the Germans will march.
3. Russian resistance may be strongly influenced if they think that, should they submit to Germans, we shall attack Baku oil.
4. If we are to use this threat to exert pressure on Russians we must control Mosul before Russians and/or Germans can forestall us.
5. Most energetic action should therefore be taken to get control on Mosul. Can you devise method to achieve this? Small air-borne force might suffice. Ends.
(1st S.L. 2221B/1 to C. in C. Med.)

Defence of Tobruk.

Chiefs of Staff No. 140 for C. in C. Med., C. in C. M.E. Reference C. in C. M.E.0/76675 dated 26/6, para 10 (c).
Any action taken to withdraw even part of garrison of Tobruk now might have far reaching effects on future plan of operations in the Western Desert. We therefore think that except in emergency no such action ought to be taken until a decision on broadest lines as to future campaign has been arrived at and confirmed at home. (Admty. 1441B/27 to C. in C. Med.)

Swordfish minelaying, Tripoli Benghazi.

2052 G.M.T./1. In order to interrupt shipping on Tripoli Benghazi route, four Swordfish 830 Sqn. F.A.A. laid 4 Cucumbers in line N. to S. at 75 yard intervals in 33.36' N. 14.22' E. Moon was obscured through operation. No opposition encountered. All Swordfish returned safely. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 0630/2 to H.Q. R.A.F. M.E.)

Supplies for Malta.

Consider supplying of Malta from Egypt is for the present impracticable by ordinary method of ships in convoy. I intend running a shuttle service with S/M's however for essentials. It appears that it might be possible to run in convoy from Gibraltar observing that air concentrations west of Malta are now relatively small. The chief danger will be that of mines in the Narrows. As Malta's need will become rapidly urgent suggest that this proposal should be given immediate consideration. It might also be possible to get the four 14 knot ships and BRECONSHIRE out to Gibraltar during one of these operations or perhaps during "Tracer". If situation becomes critical suggest consideration be given to using CLYDE and SEVERN from Gibraltar as well for supplies. (C. in C. Med. 1122C/2 to Admty.)

Demonstrations off Western Italy.

During present weakened state of Mediterranean Fleet and until a higher degree of air protection is available we shall find it difficult to operate in Central Mediterranean. Enemy may appreciate this and in consequence the Italian Fleet may become inconveniently active. It appears therefore that any steps possible to contain a proportion of Italian units by directing attention to their Western seaboard will be of value. Operations "Rocket" and "Tracer" will doubtless have this effect to some extent and any other demonstrations that appear feasible might assist in this connection.
(C. in C. Med. 2345B/2 to Admty.)

/Greek .....

Greek Fleet. Admiral Sakellariou proposes that AVEROFF, six destroyers, one submarine and repair ship should sail to India where he hopes they can refit and have asdic gear fitted. This would leave three T/Bs, four submarines and one accommodation ship at Alexandria.
Real reason behind this is low morale and lack of wish to fight on following loss of Greece and Crete. I am afraid these ships are going to be of little use to us in Mediterranean; anxiety that they will slip back to Greece when at sea. I have informed the Admiral that I have no objection to the ships going through to Suez now, but that they must there await H.M.G. decision on policy. One would like to propose that since the majority of crews really want to go home we should be glad to release them and take over the ships but, anyhow at present, it does not appear possible to make such a proposal, as the Admiral will not admit what I suspect to be the reasons underlying his proposals. (C. in C. Med., 2358C/2 to Admty.)

Swordfish Minelaying Operation, Tripoli Benghazi. Your 2228C/2. Confirmation, Observation, and secret source reports emphasized enemy was using Khoms and Zuara for unloading supplies and that traffic was proceeding very close in shore.
In view of this and necessity for quick action, these mines were laid at my request to assist S/M operations, as a sinking close in shore should drive enemy shipping further out where S/Ms can deal with them. Experience of UNBEATEN reported in S.O. S/Ms Malta's 0511B/23/5 showed great difficulty small S/Ms encountered in attacking enemy vessels close in shore. The mines were laid where a fairly accurate fix could be obtained and where they should not in any way interfere with S/M operations. (V.A. Malta, 1445B/3 to C. in C. Med.)

Suez Canal protection against mining. Proposals.
(5) Salvage equipment is inadequate. Strongly recommend that sufficient plant should be despatched to Suez forthwith. (C. in C. Med. 1947/3 to Admty.)

A/C in Middle East. Your 0026C/2 to A.O.C. in C.M.E.
So far as we know the following forces specialised in Naval reconnaissance are now in M.E.
Malta - 7 I.E. Marylands.
Egypt - 16 I.E. Marylands G.R. plus 10 Blenheim G.R. now on passage to you to replace part of present Sunderland Squadrons.
1 Flight of Single Engine and one Flight of twin-engine PRU aircraft.

/After .....

A/C in Middle East - contd.

After consultation with A.O.C. in C.M.E. please let me know if these together with day to day assistance from other types are considered adequate.
For your information there are 50 Marylands now on passage to M.E. and there will then be a gap before the Baltimores which replace the Marylands come into production. (1st S.L. 1954B/5 to C. in C. Med.)

Iraq Oil demolitions.

Chiefs of Staff No.126 to Cs. in C. M.E. and Med., with reference to C. in C.M.E.O/69888 of 3/6. Defence Committee regard denial of Iraq oil to Germany as of paramount importance. Political or other considerations cannot be allowed to delay immediate action being taken when orders are received from here. 2. Preparations should be pressed on for greatest possible destruction of Kirkuk and Mosul oilfields and pipe lines both to Tripoli and Haifa. In making preparations no regard need be had for the future of the fields. Report arrangements contemplated and how long plan will take to put into effect. (1st S.L. 1335B/6 to C. in C. Med.)

Supplies for Malta.

Your 11220/2 and S.O. Force H's 1137/4.
(1) For the moment the route westward from Malta may be less subject to air attack. I consider after Crete the enemy will soon increase again air forces in Sicily. In addition, danger from mines is great. Though single submarines have so far been lucky in passing on a constricted route, I doubt if Merchant vessels could do so with any degree of safety. Enemy cruisers or destroyers and E boats operate almost continuously to westward, making the route vulnerable to surface ship attacks and necessitating strong escort. If convoy is to pass Pantellaria in dark it must leave Malta before noon and is open to being sighted by the enemy's continuous air patrol.
(2) Consider route eastward still better. If a 14 knots convoy sails under cover of low visibility in a moonless period it would have a good chance of reaching longitude 023° E. unobserved at dawn D.3 and BRECONSHIRE alone should reach longitude 025° 30' E. If surface force and air escort met ships at dawn D.3 there should be a good chance of convoy arriving safe.
(3) If fast convoy got through successfully the slower tankers might be sailed similarly later.
(V.A. Malta, 1038B/8 to C. in C. Med.)

/Alexandria .....

Alexandria, reprisal raids.

Your 1554/8. Not possible to carry out air raids on Italian towns by aircraft from this country until the nights get considerably longer and we cannot afford to carry out retaliatory raids of this nature from M.E. in view of the limited number of bombers at present available for more urgent purposes. (1st S.L. 0117B/10 to C. in C. Med.)

Supplies for Malta.

V.A. Malta's 1038B 8 para. (ii) do not concur. It is evident that existing situation in Eastern Mediterrancan is not fully appreciated by V.A. Malta. (C. in C. Med. 1051C/11 to Admty.)

Malta Convoys.

Your 0822B/11. Difficulty of operating in Central Mediterranean does not now arise from Sicilyan Air Forces but inflexible situation of the Fleet which is at present pinned to Eastern Med. by lack of reserves and cannot consequently offer necessary cover or A.A. protection in Central Med. for passage of convoys. This precludes the Eastward passage of convoys from Malta. Para.4. In this case suggest you undertake completion to repairs to ENCOUNTER. (C. in C. Med. 1128C/12 to V.A. Malta.)

Reconn. Aircraft, Middle East.

Your 1954B/5. In near future the R.A.F. hope to have in Egypt one G.R. Blenheim squadron one P.R.U. flight which has to work for all 3 services and half a squadron G.R. Marylands with long range tanks.
(2) At present only 4 long range G.R. Marylands and 4 Sunderlands in Egypt and 7 Marylands at Malta.
(3) Clear my reconnaissance requirements cannot be met by either (1) or (2) above.
(4) To fulfil requirements there should be 2 squadrons G.R. aircraft at Malta, but limitation of space prevents more or even a different allocation of air effort from Malta.
(5) Malta can therefore do little more than search for convoys with an occasional observation of Italian harbours.
(6) Therefore necessary to increase numbers which can operate from African Coast and a total of 4 Squadrons of 16 i.e. A/C each is necessary.
(7) That such a large air effort should be tied down to reconnaissance only is unreasonable. Suggested that A/C allocated capable of bombing and readily convertible.
(8) Essential that the Marylands should be provided with long range tanks. Presumed the 50 Marylands mentioned in your 1954B/5 are so fitted.
(9) This telegram should be read in conjunction with my 0026/2 which deals with general question of aircraft for fleet co-operation.
(C. in C. Med. 1310C/12 to Admty.)

/Malta .....

Malta Garrison.

Comments on Malta cable GM/16656.
Malta's scale of defence for size of Island already exceeds both in infantry and A.A. anything we had available in Crete or can contemplate for Cyprus. British battalions are especially valuable here. Defence of aerodromes, especially in Western Desert where R.A.F. are at present using 14, is most burdensome commitment. Does Dobbie regard these battalions as absolutely vital? You realize that at present it is practically impossible to send convoy to Malta. (C. in C.M.E. No T.O.O./13 to W.O.)

Employment of Wellingtons.

Chiefs of Staff No. 131 for Cs in C. Med. and M.E. Ref. C. in C. Med's 2355C/13.
Wellingtons are being sent to M.E. in as large numbers and as fast as possible. Their employment either at Malta or in Western Desert is a matter for decision by Cs in C. in consultation, but Chiefs of Staff consider that the policy must be to concentrate on BATTLEAXE. Tripoli seems too distant to affect the immediate issue of BATTLEAXE. (1st S.L. 2353B/14 to C. in C. Med.)

Chiefs of Staff No. 134 for Cs. in C. Med. and M.E.
From latest information, it looks as though we will be forced back on the defensive on Libyan front. If so, you would probably think it right to switch reinforcements to Syria with a view to making a good and quick job of "Exporter".
2. Apart from this, request your appreciation of general situation in M.E., with particular reference to (a) Policy at Tobruk. (b) Policy at Cyprus. (c) Reinforcement and provisioning of Malta. As regards (c) we are examining possibilities of doing this through Western Mediterranean. (Ends) (1st S.L. 1344B/18 to C. in C. Med.)

Fighters and PARTHIAN. French Warships, Beirut.

F.A.A. Fighter Squadron leaves for Palestine today (?with) fighters urgently required for your force. PARTHIAN is being sent to operate off Beirut. French warships are probably one of the main stays of defence and should be harried relentlessly by your force backed if possible by day bombing by A.O.C. and at night by F.A.A. If kept continually on the run I feel they will soon depart or be destroyed. I am not in favour of minelaying as it restricts our operation. Do not consider that shore batteries should unduly worry you. Guns are not modern and can be out ranged. If fixed fire on your Squadron you should retaliate regardless of damage to surrounding domiciles. (C. in C. Med. 1200C/20 to C.S. 15.)

/Policy .....

MOST SECRET.

June 1941.

Policy. Following from C.O.S. to C. in C. Med. and C. in C. M.E. Ref. C. in C. M.E's No.1520 cipher 23/6/41. We are still in dark as regards policy you recommend in relation Tobruk. When can we expect this. Would also like something further as to your views on general situation in M.E. (1st S.L. 1520B/25.)

Proposed Operations. Preoccupation of Germany with Russia and consequent reduction of G.A.R. in Med. and particularly in Sardinia and Syracuse presents situation more favourable than likely to recur for some time. Wish to take advantage to pass in convoy to Malta from eastward and to bring out the ships now detained. In conjunction, it might be possible to bring off observation.
2. Present strength of Mediterranean Fleet is inadequate to undertake such operations of this nature without running grave risk consequent on damage incurred.
Operation (corrupt group) of being left with insufficient strong force to prevent the Italian Fleet entering the Eastern Med.
Before initiating plans necessary to know if it is intended to reinforce the battleship strength since WARSPITE and BARHAM cannot be (corrupt group) till at least the end of August by which time the opportunity may have been let slip.
I shall also be glad to know (word omitted ?when) my destroyers can be brought up to strength.
If four HUNT and the remaining "N" class destroyers are sent this should suffice always provided they (word omitted ?arrive) in time.
(C. in C. Med. 1422C/26 to Admty.)

Mediterranean Volume. MOST SECRET.

July 1941.

Russian Mission.	British Liaison Mission now being sent to Russia headed by Gen. Mason-Macfarlane. Naval section is headed by Rear Adm. G.J.A. Miles. Naval section has been instructed that the only direct action we can take to prevent entry of enemy naval forces into Black Sea from Mediterranean is by the maintenance of S/M patrols off Dardanelles and in Aegean Channels. Naval Section has been authorised to use its discretion in repeating to Middle East, India and Far East any reports addressed to Admiralty. (V.C.N.S. 0009B/1 to Cs in C. Med., E.I., China.)
M.T.B's Haifa.	M.T. Boats which are being sent to Haifa will operate under your orders. Lieut. Cdr. Peake arrives Haifa not later than 2/7 and can act as S.O.(Op.). M.T.B's are to operate off Syrian coast with object of destroying enemy and Vichy vessels. If feasible an M.T.B. attack on Warships inside Beirut Harbour should be carried out. (C. in C. Med., 1051C/1 to R.A. 15 C.S.)
RORQUAL.	Propose to retain her until 8/7 to rest crew. Propose RORQUAL should then lay a minefield in Southern Approach to passage between Lampion and Lampedusa where much traffic seems to pass, proceeding to Alexandria on completion as directed by Capt. (S) 1. Mines to be fitted with flooders. (V.A. Malta, 1425B/2 to C. in C. Med.)
Glen ships.	Following from Chiefs of Staff No. 143 to Cs. in C.Med. and M.E. The assault ships available at home are insufficient for probable needs during the next few months. Unless you foresee a use for the Glen ships for tactical purposes, the Chiefs of Staff consider that they should come home via the Cape as soon as possible. Any command personnel sent from U.K. not now required for amphibious operations in M.E., should return in Glen ships. (1st S.L. 1539B/3 to C. in C. Med.)

/Bomber .....

Bomber effort.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. 144 for C. in C. Med. and M.E.
Defence Ctee. are averse from embarking on a policy of reprisals. Hope, as nights get longer, to make heavy raids on Italy from this country. They do not think bombing of Naples would deter the Germans from bombing Alexandria which is a perfectly legitimate objective. Moreover the failure of a so-called reprisal raid to affect the scale of attack on Alexandria and the possibility that it might increase it by revealing a tender spot might well be harmful to the object you have in view. They consider that all our heavy bomber effort in the Mediterranean should be concentrated on the enemy communications to North Africa and that even small diversions should not be contemplated. (1st S.L. 1505B/4 to C. in C. Med.)

S/M Landing Parties.

Italian coastal Railways ineffectively guarded. Weather for next few months ideal for folding boats, Should be no failure to destroy engines when possible in tunnels. Am organizing military section in parties of 2 permanently attached to each S/M and intend operating 4 "U" Class as follows during waning moon: Off north of Sicily, West Calabria, East Sicily, east Calabria. All areas offer good opportunities of torpedo attacks also. (Cdr. S.1. 1130B/6 to Capt. S.1.)

Russian S/Ms Bosphorus.

Following for Rear Adm. Miles.
By opening Aegean and Dardanelles to their merchant ships the enemy obtained an important addition to their oil transport. Our own submarines have had some successes against enemy tankers in Aegean and similar action by Soviet S/Ms in Black Sea might almost kill this traffic.
2. If presented with a suitable opening you should represent importance of attacking enemy's oil supplies and particular opportunity provided by enemy tankers passing between Bosphorus and Roumanian ports.
3. A Russian S/M patrol off the Bosphorus might be urged as complementary to our own patrol off the Dardanelles. (1st S.L. 1607B/10 to N.A. Moscow.)

/MALAYA .....

MALAYA.
WARSPITE.

Admy's 1820B/16 prefer MALAYA to complete working up at Scapa, but if WARSPITE's repairs can be expedited it would be unnecessary for MALAYA to join my (corrupt group). WARSPITE's damage involves straightforward structural work which should take about 8 weeks only. Thus she could reach Mediterranean about end of October only very little later than would MALAYA about mid October, and I am particularly anxious my flagship should return here.
If MALAYA does come it is hoped she will have been fitted with R.D.F. and armed with latest approved number short range A.A. weapons.
(C. in C. Med. 1226C/18 to Adty.)

BARHAM.

Adty. 1836B/16. Request anticipated date of completion of BARHAM. She should return at once to Mediterranean but any facilities you can provide from your resources to assist her working up on passage would be appreciated. N.L.O. Durban pass to BARHAM. (C. in C. Med. 1228C/18 to C. in C.S.A., C. in C.E.I.)

Cyprus.

A.O.C. in C. has shown me message X.356 from Chief of Air Staff in which it is stated Prime Minister and Chiefs of Staff have decided measures to ensure retention of Cyprus must take priority over those in connection with offensive in Western Desert. This appears to be a very important statement on policy which has not been communicated to me. (C. in C. Med. 1330/22 to Admty.)

Vichy French Ships in Turkey.

Situation report 97. My 2330/24 para.3 N.A. Ankara now reports all interned. French ships being moved to Ayas Bay. Sailings of ADOUR and Trawler are not therefore (?confirmed). R/C A/C reported sighting and attacking a ship in 036° 12' N. 030° 45' E. Details not yet known. Operation "Guillotine" continuing satisfactorily. Store Ship LESBOS arrived Tobruk. (C. in C. Med. 2352C/25.)

/Syria .....

MOST SECRET.

July 1941.

Syria, Cyprus, Libya, priority.

Your 1330/22. Origin of this was telegram No. 064 of 6/7 personal and secret for Gen. Auchinleck from Prime Minister, the first two paras of which read as follows and which you may not have seen:-
"Your No. 1527/4/7. I agree about finishing off Syria and here we have always thought that holding Syria is the necessary foundation for holding or re-taking Cyprus. One hopes that Syria may not be long now and that you are not forestalled in Cyprus. The priority of both these operations over offensive action in Western Desert after what has happened is fully recognised. 2. Nevertheless, Western Desert remains decisive theatre this Autumn for defence of Nile Valley. Only by re-conquering the lost airfields of Eastern Cyrenaica can Fleet and Air Force resume effective action against enemy sea-borne supplies." (1st S.L. 1336B/26 to C. in C. Med.)

Naval raid on Malta 26/7.

Your 1114B and para. C. of 1251B/27 documents are being sent in bags in charge of pilot of Sunderland 5806 tonight 27th. Request no mention may be made of captured enemy vessel as I suggest enemy is unaware of such documents being compromised. (V.A. Malta 2150B/27 to Adty.)

Mediterranean Volume.

MOST SECRET.

August 1941

RENOWN NELSON.	RENOWN port bulge working requires docking and pumping down 10 ft. on return. NELSON's R.D.F. defective. (S.O. Force H. 1856B/1.)
M.T.B's.	Possibility that Turkey may find herself involved in the war makes early arrival of M.T.B's and their maintenance requirements of utmost urgency since in such circumstances these craft are ideally suited to operate in Aegean from Turkish bases. Request every step may therefore be taken to expedite. Following signals refer Admiralty 1627/17/7 (?1639/17 intended) and C.N.S. Ottawa 1658/3/7. (C. in C. Med. 1901C/1 to Adty.)
Supplies for Tobruk.	Difficulty of maintaining supplies to Mersa Tobruk is a grave cause of anxiety. T.L.C's are not proving satisfactory due to the slow speed in any but calm weather and unreliability of their engines. Four destroyers are continuously employed but this only results in 80 tons per day. (a) Can any further steps be taken to provide suitable ships of 1500 to 2000 ? (b) Can the two ships referred to in my 1214/6/7 (?1114/6 intended) be equipped quickly to carry cargo of say 300 tons for discharge through baggage port. (c) Can arrival of SHUNTIEN on Med. Station be hastened Adty.2003B/1 refers. (C. in C. Med. 1245/5 to Adty.)
Tobruk Supplies.	My 1155/3/7 difficulty of maintaining Tobruk supplies without the necessary small fast cargo carrier is causing me great anxiety. Would it be possible for a suitable ship to be spared from E.I. from among those taken up as H.M. ships. JUNA and CHAKLA who were sent from India as Admiralty Boom Defence vessels proved most useful until they were sunk. (C. in C. Med. 1531C/5 to C. in C.E.I.)
Fast Cargo Ships.	Problem of supply is going to be determining factor in future projects. Provision of small fast cargo ships provides only practicable solution. Of highest importance to have these craft here by mid-October at latest. Proposals in Adty's 1859/6 are of great assistance, but I am concerned lest valuable ships should arrive too late. Should welcome any further ships of this type since there are bound to be losses and if projects succeed our supply commitment will be of order of 2000 tons a day. (C. in C. Med., 2003C/9 to Admty.for 1st S.L.)

/Folbot .....

Folbot Section S/M's.

Propose reorganising Folbot section so as eventually to provide all submarines operating under C. in C. Med. with Folbot complement. Section will be administered by G(R) branch G.H.Q. Middle East. Unit to be attached to combined training centre. Request very urgent approval by cable. (C. in C. M.E., 2030/14 to W.O.)

Syria, Control of Ports.

Your 0106/19. Admty. 2010/13 was answered in my 1153/15. Owing to an error there was delay in transmission of one portion but whole message had been received by Admty. by 0930/18.
(ii) Present position is given in my signal quoted. Important point is that no step must be taken which will interfere with our military control of Syria ports because these ports are essential to supply of our present forces in Syria and this commitment may become much larger. Agreement referred to in my 1153/15 covers these points. Request therefore Admiralty will give no countenance to any measure which will affect our control of ports for military purposes. Believe so far as civil side is concerned (?they are) willing to give Free French control. Suggest however this (?arrangement) be allowed invariably as proposed to stipulate (? representation).
(iii) Opinion locally through Commandant Jacquet is that Capitaine Frigate Kolb-Bernard has the reputation of being difficult and trouble maker. (C. in C. Med. 1353C/21 to Admty.)

Turkey. Offer of Air Forces.

Following for COS from C.in C. M.E. and A.O.C. in C. para 1, ref. Our A/203,25/8. Cs in C. have discussed matter and consider that definite offer of Air Forces to Turkey early in 1942 should be made. Assuming that 62½ Sqdn. programme has been completed, that we have by that time recaptured Cyrenaica but not yet taken Tripoli, and that Germans have not reached Caucasus, we calculate that Sqdns. of type suitable for Turkey might be disposed as follows:
2. Short range fighter Sqdns. Malta 3. Benghazi, Derna. Tobruk, Matruh, 1 each to provide fighter cover for seaborne supplies to Cyrenaica. Support of Army in Cyrenaica 1. Delta 2. Cyprus, Haifa, Beirut, 1 each. Mosul, Baghdad, Basra, 1 each. This leaves 6 for Turkey out of 22 presumed available. In addition the Sqdns. at Haifa, Beirut, and Cyprus will give direct help to Turkey by protecting our lines of communication.
3. Medium bomber Sqdns. Cyrenaica 3, Iraq 3, Malta 1. This leaves 7 for Turkey out of 17 available.

/4. Heavy .....

Turkey. Offer of Air Forces contd.

4. Heavy bomber Sqdns. Cyrenaica and Malta 3. This leaves 2 for Turkey out of 5 available.
5. Army Co-operation Sqdns. Cyrenaica 1, Syria 1, Iraq 1. This leaves 3 for Turkey out of 6 available. End part 1.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1722/26.) Part 2
Para.6. Summary of Air Forces which might be offered to Turkey. Short range fighters 6 squadrons. Medium bombers 7 squadrons, one of which might be used as G.R. Squadron. Heavy Bombers 2 Squadrons, Army Co-operation 3 squadrons.
Para.7. Chief shortage is in fighters which Turks most need. 6 Squadrons quite inadequate to compete with scale of enemy air attack and which would certainly be met. If we could send more fighters we should increase our chances of obtaining local air superiority and could send more medium Bombers and use then with greater effect.
Para.8. We are also very short of heavy bombers which could be effectively used from Turkish bases not only against German communications and ports of entry into Turkey but also against important targets in South East Europe should enemy advance be checked.
Para.9. C. in C. Mediterranean fully concurs with above but is of the opinion that taking into consideration the heavy fighter commitment involved in protecting the supplies by sea due to the proximity of enemy aerodromes in Greece and Crete, the fighters left in Cyrenaica after the despatch of 6 fighter squadrons to Turkey are inadequate and may involve us in a difficult situation as was experienced in March 1941 when the air forces in Cyrenaica were withdrawn to assistance of Greece. He therefore urges that every effort should be made to bring the number of fighter squadrons up to that recommended in P.S. Paper 59 as being necessary for our commitments. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1723/26.)

S/M Reinforcements.

Admty. 1936A/26.
A. TUNA is considered unsuitable for this service on account of unreliable engines.
It is not proposed to send "S" class on account of their age and complications arising from the supply of spare gear, none of which is abroad.
B. Propose therefore to sail following submarines: TRUSTY on completion of working up about 1/9. THORN on completion of working up about 21/9. SOKOL about 7/9. P.31 About 30/9.
C. Requested concurrence of Polish authorities may be obtained for SOKOL.
D. If approved it is intended that P.35 should join 9th Flotilla on completion of working up in place of P.31. (F.O.S., 1022A/27 to Admty.)

/Syrian .....

MOST SECRET.

August 1941.

Syrian Ports.

Kolb-Bernard may by now have shown you official orders given to him by Adm. Muselier. Latter states that they represent aspirations for final settlement rather than instructions to be immediately executed. Each part is to be brought into force only in consultation with British Naval Authorities.
Orders were not shown to Admty. before Kolb-Bernard's departure. If you have not yet seen the orders, suggested you should ask Kolb-Bernard to show them to you so that you may tell him what is immediately possible and what is not. For your personal information only, Adm. Muselier states that Official orders are in this form in order not to evoke criticism from De Gaulle. He hopes that any difficulties which may arise will be referred to himself in London.
Para. 3 of your 1353/21. C. in C. Portsmouth and B.L.O. Portsmouth who have had considerable experience of Kolb-Bernard report most favourably on him and state that he is a first class Officer in every respect. In particular he is reported to work very well with us.
(V.C.N.S. 2012A/28 to C. in C. Med.)

ENDING OF

REEL K-14-B

DOCUMENTS PHOTOGRAPHED

admiralty War diaries
1-10-41 to 31-12-41
cont'd from Reel K-13-B

ON 1

DATE: 17 April 1946

MACH. NO. 473

PHOTOGRAPHED BY: James Cunningham